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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHRIST

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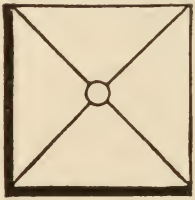
BY

PAUL KARISHKA

David Patterson Hatch



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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHRIST.

Dedicated

TO

GEN. AND MRS. M. C. WENTWORTH

WENTWORTH HALL, NEW HAMPSHIRE

BY

PAUL KARISHKA

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INTRODUCTION

We propose to investigate the philosophy of the Four Gospels of the New Testament as we would that of the Koran or Pitaka. We shall attempt this free from partiality, prejudice, and emotion, using the searchlight of intellect only, to discover, if possible, what the real cult of Christianity is. To do this we must ignore all that man and the church have taught,— all theologies, all dogmas, taking the most accurate version of the New Testament that it is possible to obtain as our source of information.

The naked scripture is an Oriental Sphinx, hard to decipher at best, without binding it with theological bandages, until it becomes fit only for the sarcophagus. Understand it is the cult of Christianity that we desire to discover, as taught by the man Jesus. We

seek in the scripture a philosophy which may later be translated into a religion, if one shall so elect, and according as we find it consistent with itself shall we believe it good or evil. This undoubtedly seems to the prejudiced reader intensely sacrilegious, but in the name of Almighty Truth we here declare that it is the dread of committing sacrilege that has kept untold millions from treating the scripture with any sort of fairness or honesty. The church, the priest, the dungeon, the fagot, hell, have all interfered and prevented just judgment, and in reality are coercing the intellect of mankind even to this day. Therefore we propose to dare to look upon these leaves of scripture as though they were but recently written, imagining them to have never been scanned by a Master of Theology, or a priest of religion. We take them new-born, fresh, virgin; having previously burned all the commentaries and ignored all critiques. From this you will perceive that we have no intention of trying to make the myths of the Four Gospels fit each other nor

to prove whether Jesus existed in reality or was simply an ideal; nor shall we seek to justify the miracle.

To get the cult naked, as we say, we must strip it down to its bare palpitating body; all its magical adornments must come off. The legends, those fantastic birds hovering above it, must be utterly ignored; and though we postulate the man Jesus, accepting him as a historic possibility, it makes no difference in this investigation whether he really existed or not. Pythagoras may be but a name, but the law of antithesis and the principles of Geometry are vital facts and survive whether or no. Bhagavat, the Blessed, will live more surely as a principle than as a man; and Herbert Spencer will have perished out of history long before his Synthesis of Philosophy is conquered and assimilated by the world. One in dead earnest after a system of truth or rule of action practically ignores persons, or at any rate makes them secondary to the great end in view.

How the Gospels were written, when, or in

what land, we do not care. Whether half a dozen hands manipulated them or one, it makes no difference. Do they contain a consistent philosophy? — we demand to know. Can they be applied or are they a delusion? Right here, then, we would state that church Christianity is no key whatever, in our opinion, to the philosophy of Jesus as to application. In getting at his teaching we shall aim to discover its hidden meaning, irrespective of priests or church; for they have failed to make the philosophy of Christianity consistent with itself, and are therefore no guides to us in our critical examination. We know of no church that has promulgated the teachings of Jesus and practiced the same. We know of no priest bound to a creed and whipped into line by the lash of dogma, that entirely reflects the cult of the Gospels. The church teems with truthful axioms, and in its symbolic way is a blessing to mankind. The priest goes about doing good and is a necessity in this age and generation, but the goodness or badness of priest and church are

irrelevant here; we are after the philosophy of Jesus, and as they neither accurately portray nor represent it, we set them aside in this discussion from now on.

If Jesus were an ideal, he was indeed a fine conception. If an historical reality, we have but a slight revelation of him; of that you may be certain. History gives a few salient incidents in a man's career and is silent about the substratum. Legend, by word of mouth, paints the air about him with a glow and color, lurid or tender, as the case may be, till the dim historic fact is seen in a halo and merged into mist. Gautama and Mahomet pierce through the clouds like the lofty peaks of a mountain; and so rises the clear-cut head of Jesus above the bedraggled legend of mystery, into the cold air where it looks with half-tender scorn over the deluded world, and the mischief wrought thereon by man, through a false conception of himself.

But you protest that every individual has the right to pick out the pattern of a cult according to his conception of the design; and

to this we heartily say, Amen! We insist only that there is a design and that you or any other must make the pattern consistent with itself; in other words that you find the thread of unity running steadily and unbroken through the warp and woof of heterogeneity. No philosophy can stand the test of modern investigation for a day that is self-contradictory. Truth, no doubt, you find everywhere; but a system of philosophy — that is the question.

The substratum of an historic character is, *ex necessitate*, the base of the individual. As you discover that, will your ideal stand firm or topple over?

We believe that the man Jesus, or the individual or individuals who conceived of such an ideal, had a system of philosophy, translatable if one so desire into a religion. Or, to put it plainer, we believe that the best version of the Four Gospels as extant to-day contains a cult consistent with itself, if interpreted by philosophic, scientific, and logical methods, irrespective of myth, miracle,

priest, or church. But, mind you, should we discover in them a consistent system, it in no sense stands in the way of other as truly great cults. Jesus can no more blot out Gautama than can Sirius put out Polaris. Zoroaster shines yet in the starry heaven of philosophy. Pythagoras and Apollonius are glittering facts. The new organon of Bacon dims no whit the ancient organon of Aristotle. The constellation that revolves about Spencer hinges on the true swing of Copernicus. Jesus was tutored by the "Thrice Great," or the fabled Trismegistus; and as he has kept the chain that binds the immortals unknotted, so will he stand or fall through the onslaught of the ages.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHRIST

I

"OUT OF EGYPT CALLED I MY SON"

WHY out of Egypt? for there is a why and wherefore to everything. By no possibility can there be a teaching of Jesus of any value that does not stand the test of the why and wherefore. Every assertion made by him is judged by the measuring rod of law, inherent self-settling law, and stands or falls by the logic of cause and effect. It was prophesied that he should come out of Egypt, — Khem the ancient, the home of the fabled Trismegistus, the great, great, great. The seer felt the spell of triple sublimity. Intellect gigantic, heart bursting, and body subjected, — sacrificed.

A philosophy of mind only is an ice peak that reflects the sun's rays with the indiffer-

ence of a mirror; a philosophy of heart only is an unhindered conflagration that destroys without discrimination; while a cult of body only is a superb flower born from the rotting pile of the dead. Trismegistus stands for the great, great, great; the cult of giant intellect, of fiery heart, and resistant frame.

The seer saw Jesus coming out of Egypt, potent of brain, tender of feeling, with body of sinew and fiber, a perfected trinity of being — great, great, great.

Diamonds glitter in the shadow. Stars shine brightest on a dark night. Jesus was foiled by Nazareth; aye, more, by the Jew. The Master in Egypt might have found his peer, but in Galilee he towered supreme. How he was instructed no one knows; this only is said of him, — he had been down into Egypt, under the perennial blue of an almost stainless sky, in an atmosphere of thought profound where dwelt the wise.

To tread the soil of Attica is to become half Greek. To climb the flanks of the Himalayas is to absorb the life dew of Asia.

To go down into Egypt is to pierce its intellect and probe its heart. It matters not whether he were child or man when he returned to the land of his birth. He had been under Egyptian influence, subtle, all-penetrating, and but half translatable. He had realized subconsciously, if in no other way, the Ancient, or the Law. He had caught at the principle of Antithesis, which shook China to its foundations in the days of Laotsze, and was, later, to shock the West with its astounding paradoxes. To be thrice great is to go about masked with the visage of the Sphinx. To wed intellect and heart at the altar of body is to force in the meeting of extremes, the paradox upon the world. Trismegistus will tell you that night is the other pole of day; that the extremity of sorrow is the dawn of bliss; and that he sees heaven best who has the vantage point of hell.

Jesus turned the unholy West inside out. He shattered the exterior idol of Occidentalism and presented to the astonished gaze

of the new world the interior God of Orientalism. He struck at the gross materialism of the Jew with a spiritualistic sword and cut right and left, separating wives from their husbands, children from their parents, and the rich from their gold. "His fan was in his hand." He winnowed and accepted; eliminated and selected; he sifted and picked and blasted; he tore down and he built. His powerful mind was both analytic and synthetic. He saw beneath the trunk and branches of the tree of life to the subtle root of things. He came down upon the astonished minds of his disciples like a ponderous bird, with the terrible swoop of deduction, or rose to the sublime heights of a principle loaded with the data of induction. He destroyed Jerusalem and rebuilt it. In one hand he carried the olive branch of peace, in the other the two-edged sword of war. He spake nipping words of sarcasm, or tender ones of love. He wept, he rejoiced. He died, he lived.

In these modern times we hunt the world

over for a Master; long since having rejected the abnormal Jesus of Western Orthodoxy, we seek in some new David the man whose God is in him. A vague yearning for the thrice great possesses us, — the ancient Trismegistus with head, heart, and body strung to the pitch of immortality, — a veritable harp attuned to all environment, capable of symphony, rhapsody, divine harmony; upon which is played the mass chord of the world. Let us tell you that among them (for earth has conceived many masters) towers the Teacher of Syria who traversed for three years the country around Bethlehem and Nazareth, and who makes it less essential that you seek some one, impossible, in the Thibetan Mountains and the heights of Hindoo Koosh. And this Master of Masters, this being thrice Great, came out of Egypt.

II

THE MIRACLE

MANY of the Immortals, from Zoroaster to Mahomet, were ushered in or sustained in the arena of life with the trumpet blast and the miracle. So said the recorders who spun these fairy tales. Zoroaster, the sage of Iran, laughed the moment he was born. At the birth of Gautama a shadow settled over his cradle, nature being benevolent, while sages sought him from far off. Jesus was immaculately conceived, and Mahomet, after his mission began, was visited by the angel Gabriel.

Why these myths are considered essential to the bolstering of a lofty character the recorder alone knows, unless the common people, ignorant and superstitious, are supposed to be unable to appreciate greatness

for greatness' sake. There may possibly be another reason, — the Master can do wonders without doubt, which to the uneducated are miracles. These marvels, seized upon by the historian who is essentially loose in his methods, are colored and doctored with his decorative imagination, till the crude and vulgar taste of the expectant crowd is satisfied. Greatness in the abstract is not for the rabble; greatness in the concrete being alone satisfactory.

Miracles, as generally defined, we believe never were and never will be. All things, whether wonderful or common, are done by law, which is as true to itself in psychics as in physics. In fact, no man, Master or God, ever transcended one law save by another; his free will even being true to the law of itself, which is that of willing. The wonders, then, done by the notorious or great in history, sifted, amount to this: either they were the result of expert jugglery or a marvelous comprehension of the laws and the Law.

The Magi were black or white; servants of Baal or the Almighty. To one of the latter there are and have been thousands of the former; for to match a David with his sling stone, a more mighty than Goliath is essential. Jugglers, conjurers, fakirs, soothsayers, and sorcerers are and always have been in every country on earth. Many of them are masters of mysterious secrets that have money value, which secrets, descending from father to son for generations, are worth as much to the inheritor as an entailed estate. The mass of people love to be gulled and mystified; they enjoy the shudder that shocks them when the inexplicable comes their way. The blasé world longs for new sensations, and the fiery absinthe of a miracle goes down their dry throats with a rush. They eagerly swallow dream-making potions and vision-breeding decoctions. They crave literature reeking with fairy tales and impossible situations. They are determined to take fiction for reality and paste for gems. A hundred

jugglers are paid and petted to one great Master who starves. The true Seer goes arm in arm with poverty, while the false fakir is fat in body and pocket. "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

The world not only cultivates these frauds, but cheats itself by imagining it believes in them. Even men of greatness, who have developed brains, hinge the superiority of the Godlike teacher of Nazareth on the miracle. Human nature is peculiar; it craves, it demands, wonders; it insists that the Christ shall be immaculate in birth, that he shall rise from the dead and ascend into heaven. A contradictory and impossible being is worshiped, while the great Possible dwells on the mountain top alone.

In pursuing this search after a consistent philosophy in the Four Gospels, we shall refrain from studying the miracles said to have been done by Jesus, believing that a few lines here in regard to them will suffice.

He healed the sick by a word, a glance, a touch; men do the same to-day. He raised the so-called dead; it is possible now. Trance and death are sometimes taken the one for the other in this advanced age; how much more likely that such a mistake should occur 1900 years ago. The healing powers of Jesus, then, are not to be considered as miraculous in any sense. Suppose him to have been a celibate, vital with conserved energy; his touch, his glance, his magnetism, if one may so speak, were exhilarants, simply intoxicating to the degenerate and sick. One like Jesus must necessarily have the healing, revivifying power, or the law of his being is false to itself. No one thrice great, searching, subtle in intellect, intense in feeling, and healthy, and celibate in body, can fail to be a marvelous physician whether he will or not. His very presence shocks the decrepit to their feet; yet even a Jesus has his limitations, but just where the line can be drawn it is hard to determine.

We eliminate, then, from the miracles re-

corded in the Four Gospels all instances of healing, presuming the most of them to have been possible from the very nature of the Master. Remembering his lofty character, we cannot for an instant believe him capable of jugglery or trickery; so the other marvels, such as turning water into wine, the feeding of the multitude with improvised loaves and fishes, the cursing of the fig tree, etc., we set aside as legend that naturally gathered around one who did a sufficient number of wonders to excite the myth tendency in the mind of a recorder making public his work long after the man of marvels had died. It is the tendency where history is carried down more or less by word of mouth, to add to a certain vaguely remembered unusual incident a hundred others, until the probable is lost in the improbable and the impossible swallows the possible. Let us not be misunderstood, however; if we discover a consistent philosophy in the teaching of Jesus, and if the preacher of the same were true to it, we maintain that not

only his power, but that of any one else who practices, must be well-nigh marvelous, and without doubt would appear miraculous to those who failed to understand the cause. A being who could magnetize the world as Jesus has done for approximately nineteen centuries must have had an astounding system of philosophy and a wonderful skill in practicing the same. In other words, he was a philosopher, and consequently a magician. It is hard to find on earth an honest man, and still harder to discover a genuine sage; and by this we mean an individual who has tested his cult by actual experience. A man is never wise until he knows truth intellectually and experimentally. The majority of so-called philosophers are but half fledged; they grasp a system with their minds, but fail to test it in action. That doctor who tries his medicine on himself knows its effect far better than one who experiments on some one else.

Let us sift the matter, then, to this: If the Gospels contain a genuine system of

philosophy, some person or persons conceived it. The conceiver, or conceivers, having proved it, must necessarily have the powers resulting therefrom; and the works done by him or them could not seem otherwise than miraculous to those ignorant of the cause. About the being or beings who taught this cult would necessarily gather legend or myth, because of this lack of understanding on the part of the masses, as to the origin of the master's success. As far as we are concerned in our investigation of the Gospels, the sphinx of the miracle is solved; first, by the greatness of the powers of the man; second, by the myths which naturally gather about so peerless an individual. The same causation that bred legends in the wake of Zoroaster, Guatama, or Mahomet, produced them also in the trail of Jesus, whether he were man or the synthetic ideal of the race called Jews.

III

CONTEMPORANEOUS HISTORY

WHY is profane, contemporaneous history approximately silent about the life and great work of the man called Jesus if such work and man were? This question is well put. How was it possible for Herod to destroy the first-born of Israel at the time of the expected birth of a new king without all the historians of that age making record of so terrible an event? If the mighty works were done by Christ which the Gospels record, it would seem as if a galaxy of historians would necessarily have kept a strict and unbiased account. But this is not the fact. No convenient and patient Herodotus put down in clear-cut history a narrative of the man or his marvels. No improvised Philo was on hand to tell the

tale. No special Josephus gave even a chapter to the events of that startling drama of the Jews. No standard poet sang either an epic or a lyric in honor of Jesus' name. "He was despised and rejected," not only by the Gentile but also by the historians of the Jews. We can find but one explanation for this, namely: He, or the philosophy he idealizes, was so far in advance of the classes with whom he consorted, that they, being ignorant, were simply unable to write his teaching down. He preached to the illiterate; and the men of learning and brain of his time either knew nothing of him, or, because of the company which he kept, avoided him altogether, — he being in their eyes unworthy of historical consideration.

Jesus was ahead of his age and immeasurably ahead of the Jew. The scholars of the time we count out, because they stood quite aloof from the fanatic who strove to foist a practical philosophy upon the world by the apparent absurdity of living it. Whether

such silence could be maintained to-day is another question. We must remember that the age of Jesus was not one of daily papers nor telegraphs; news traveled slowly and records were rare and precious. An apparent fanatic, then, whom the rabble followed and whose disciples were illiterates, nailed later between two thieves on a cross, would be of little account to an aristocratic historian who would necessarily look upon him as a street fakir and nothing more, one of a class with which the East was continually cursed. In fact, not until the philosophy was recorded with some faint attempt at system, would the higher grade of intellect be attracted to the promulgator of such astonishing teaching. The fame of Jesus, or whoever stood for him, was not apparent to the brain of the world till Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John flashed upon it the marvel of a philosophy that no master before or after Jesus has outrivaled.

We believe, then, that he might have lived, taught the profoundest truth, and died

unnoticed by the historians of his day, though he passed by their houses and looked into their eyes. Were Sappho to sing her hymn to Aphrodite before a crowd of illiterate Greeks, Alcæus would consider her unworthy of a glance. He who elects that the laurel shall fall upon his marble brow from the hands of an unknown century is passed over by his contemporaneous historians, and ignored by the scribe of his day. We believe, then, that Jesus, or those for whom he ideally stood, had little or no effect upon the cultured circle of his age, for two reasons: first, because what he said was not circulated among the scholars, or, if it reached them, was so tinged with apparent fanaticism that it made but little impression; and second, because he chose to practice what he preached, and was consequently looked upon as a cheap specimen of a Socrates who instructed the youth of Syria with fallacious sophistries that bred mischief and dissensions on the street corners. Even Paul, a most ardent disciple of Jesus, must have impressed

the thinking class — for instance, such men as Philo Judeas — somewhat as would a Wallace or Crooks affect the scientific aristocrats of to-day, when dabbling in spiritualistic phenomena and fraternizing with ghosts.

Let us reiterate: Contemporaneous history takes small stock in one so little understood as Jesus must have been on account of his paradoxical position and teaching. It may be said without much bravado, that if the Twentieth Century has not grasped him, how then should the first century have understood him sufficiently to deem him worthy of mention?

If his teaching contains the flower of truth, it must also contain the root. If Jesus were the Alpha and Omega, he was necessarily a paradox comprehended only by two orders of beings, — those simple and childlike of heart, or lofty and comprehensive of intellect. We set, then, the question of contemporaneous history aside, believing that a man like Jesus was possible in spite of it.

The philosophy which he promulgated was

not his alone; the same truth under other forms had flashed across the world before — and before, and needed but a glance from the scrutinizing eye of the thinker to enable him to discover the lightning letters which never afterwards could be effaced from the tablet of his soul.

The Biblical account of the destruction of the first-born has practically no contemporaneous authority to sustain it; and that with the mysterious Star of Bethlehem, unless it be taken symbolically, must be set aside; for though contemporaneous history might well have ignored Jesus, it could never have escaped these facts, if facts they were.

IV

DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACCOUNTS

One has but to study carefully to find decided differences, not to say contradictions, in the accounts of Jesus given by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Of course if the story of Jesus is a myth, this is easily explained and we need waste no words in the discussion of so simple a subject; but we cannot dismiss it thus easily. We believe that the man called the Christ might have very well existed, in spite of the discrepancies in the accounts of him given many years after his death. The different writers could not have been present at all the events recorded, and may have put down hearsay reports, construing them to fit their own imaginations. Unless these four disciples (if they existed and wrote these books) witnessed every action of Jesus and the acts of all those connected with him, they

were hardly responsible for the introduction of considerable fiction into their records.

The imagination, where it has so peerless a character as that of this ideal or real Jesus to deal with, is liable where the records were given out long after his death, to be in evidence to bolster a hazy and faulty memory, which is sure to result from the passage of time and new and opposing environment. We are not so foolish as to try to reconcile these accounts, for contradictions can never be reconciled. A contradiction is not a paradox, however much the divines of orthodoxy may assert to that effect; so let us be content to take the Gospels as they are; an absurd attitude toward them causes the light of their truth to be partially hid, and the world deluded by the smoky travesty which passes for the real thing.

Now we reiterate once more that whether Jesus existed or not, the discrepancies in the accounts stand and must be accepted; though in spite of them we believe that he might have lived. We set this aside, how-

ever, as not especially bearing on the philosophy; the narrative is not the cult. Should we find as many contradictions in the latter as are easily discovered in the former, we should be obliged to posit that either Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John had failed in transcribing it, or that there is in reality no consistent philosophy at all.

Though we discover the key to this system, undoubtedly we shall ascertain that the lock is a little rusty and does not turn as readily under our hand as it would have done had it been put in place and oiled by a Kant or a Spencer. Nevertheless, we believe that we shall succeed in turning the key and unlocking the door to a Temple of Truth; the same hoary structure where the ancients worshiped and the wise debated long ere Jesus strove to force the materialistic Jews into it with the sarcastic persuasiveness of his voice, or the power of the so-called miracle.

Allow us here to digress a little. Truth, however differently presented, in its finality

is one. Whether under the guise of dualism or monism, abstraction or concretion, dogma or free thought, Truth is Truth — it is one. Therefore the great, great, great teachers — and there have been but few — have presented, under a different exterior, the same thing; for instance, the philosophies of Laotsze and Confucius are two poles of one truth, as are also those of Pythagoras and Plato, Guatama and Jesus. Some of the Masters search after truth deductively, others inductively; but whether they start at objectivity or subjectivity, — matter or mind, — they reach the same central unity — *One.*

Now there are innumerable pseudo-philosophers that skim around on the deep ocean of truth, somewhat as do mosquitoes upon the pool where they were born. That they fail to find the identical "Pearl of Great Price" discovered by the wise is not strange. One goes deep for this costly jewel; it never floats; and whether it be found by the eye of the intellect or the

magnetic touch of emotion, one must dive to the profundities to obtain a consciousness of its utter loneliness; for it has no rival in the depths or heights, the light or dark. If we then find this truth in the Four Gospels, what matter if there are discrepancies in the accounts? Truth may be draped in the flimsy garment of illusion, adorned with gems of fancy, and painted with the brush of superstition; or she may come forth from the laboratory of science nearly naked, having about her only the thin veil which no cold specialist has ever yet lifted, or intense synthesist dared to touch. However she appears, she is Truth — and One. Zarathustra, in his apparent dualism, in reality had One. Laotsze, in his paradox, forced extremes to the meeting-point and discovered One. Gautama found the Law of Laws in the Ekayana, which is One. Mahomet, mid all his blundering, realized Allah — that is One. The atheist points triumphantly to force; it is constant — it is One. Modern religions preach God — One. Science says

unity — One. Hermeticism whispers, "The One Thing."

The falsest teacher that walks over earth but digs a grave to hide the truth which protrudes its immortal head from the rottenness of the tomb. Though it swarm with the gnawing maggots of superstition and fraud, yet its glittering eyes move and flash, compelling the thinker to recognize that no grave is deep enough to bury it, nor winds strong enough to waft it out of sight.

If, then, even in the crudest and most wicked belief, the One writhes and struggles for freedom, how shall we pronounce anathemas upon the Four Gospels when, full of errors as they are, the false is but a feather in the scale, weighed with the fundamental truth found there, — truth the ultimate of pearl and the genesis of gold. We sweep argument aside and stop the mouth of the critic. "We agree with you, sir, — we agree; waste no words, please, on us; save your eloquence for the superstitious."

The Gospels do contradict each other, discrepancies are as thick as the weeds in an unkept flower bed; but the flower blooms, let us tell you. We are open to conviction; disprove our assertion if you can. This unique blossom has in it the odors of Araby and the fragrance of the gardens of Hesperides. You may call it the "Lily of the Valley," the "Rose of Sharon," or the lotus bloom, we care not which. You may discover Egypt in its breath, the pine-scented heights of Himalaya, a Persian garden, or the spices of Ceylon. You may detect the color of Mongolia in its petals, and the yellow of Hindostan in its corolla, — this matters not. You will find that it is of the original stock; that no grafting has ever been done upon it, nor fictitious soil placed at its roots. Though weeds should grow shoulder high about it, and dark malaria-breeding pools ingulf it, it lives till a Trismegistus, under the guise of a Jesus or a Spencer, tears away those flaunting hypocrites — the weeds — and exposes it without fear or favor to the hot stare of the noonday sun.

V

HIS DARING SPEECH

We turn casually to the fourth chapter of Luke and find that Jesus came into Nazareth, the place where he had been reared, and was there "despised and rejected."

It seems that he entered the temple, according to his custom, and stood up to read. Opening the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, he found the place where was written: —

> "The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Because he anointed me to deliver a
> joyful message to the destitute.
> He sent me forth to proclaim
> to captives a release,
> And to the blind recovery of sight;
> To send away the crushed with a release;
> To proclaim the welcome year of the Lord."

"And folding the scroll he returned it to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all the synagogue were looking steadfastly

at him." . . . "And he said unto them, Ye will surely speak to me this parable, Physician, cure thyself; as many things as we ourselves heard of, coming to pass in Capernaum, do here also in thine own country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, no prophet is welcome in his own country." . . . "And all were filled with wrath in the synagogue, hearing these things. And rising up they thrust him forth outside the city and led him unto the brow of the mountain on which their city was built, so as to throw him down headlong. He, however, passing through their midst, was journeying along."

The alpha and omega of the character of a great teacher is daring speech. The Master talks as one having authority.

"And so do others," you answer; "the vulgar clown on the street corner has the gift of words."

True, but no enraged Nazareth has ever yet seized upon one of them and carried him up to the hilltop to cast him thence and destroy him utterly. His babble lights as dew-

drops on the outer garment of the crowd to vanish the moment it falls. But he who speaks with authority says but a word, and humanity is transfixed.

"And whence this authority?" you ask. Whence? from the Oracle itself; whether out of the mouth of the Japanese Amida-butsu, or that of a priestess of Delphi, — whether the last word of Science or the first of Solomon, the oracle is unerring. It teaches principles; it reveals facts; it towers above argument and is beyond dispute; it is final and convincing; it is Truth. He who speaks with authority has truth — is truth. The people swallow lies and illusions with relish, and nail the God to the cross. Why is this, you wonder. Because truth puts man to shame; he sees himself in the light of it ugly, despicable; and forthwith smashes the mirror that reflects his innate wickedness. Like aged Elizabeth of England, he demands a false glass that he may delude himself into the belief that he is the fairest among the fair. Humanity loves

its gold, its ambitions, its lusts of the flesh; and would have no master save the one who condones its excesses and excuses its shortcomings. Let a man, speaking with authority, call individuals by their true names, and they stone their accuser to death. The world will not have the truth. It will not see itself as it is. It will not give up its beastly instincts. It will not cease to kill and steal and lie; nor will it tolerate one who exposes it in its unwashed, foul-smelling nakedness to itself.

Much more does a special locality resent a prophet born of its very womb. This to the favored or cursed city is the acme of contradiction. That the harlot Nazareth should nourish purity in the form of man is harder to conceive than that a foul pool should bear white lilies on its breast, or the jaws of a degraded cur be sown with pearls. Nazareth will not be taught by one of its own people. The Christ for America could not be an American. Jesus forestalled the men of his country by stating this at the very be-

ginning of his great work; and they, in anger at the truth, — for they perceived it to be such at once, — attempted to put him to death.

To run down the gamut of history and seize upon a note here and there, under the guise of a Savonarola, a Galileo, a Bruno, or a John Knox, would be but reiteration and out of place. That these men used daring speech we are aware. That Truth forced them to martyrdom is no news. Truth! how many dead and tortured bodies has she stood upon, waving the inextinguishable torch over the pallid faces of her martyrs; revealing the fagot, the knife, the bomb; unassailable yet ever assailing; alive and alone 'mid skeletons and tombs. Even to-day, though the Nazarene was hung upon the cross over nineteen hundred years ago, even to-day the clear light flashes over the suffering, the dying, and the dead. No one among you in this civilized age dares to speak the truth, the whole truth, and face your kind. Are you a man of affairs? come

forth and turn the temple of trade inside out. Reveal, but for an instant, the underground byways and tunnels, the crannies and cracks through which the sneak in finance is struggling to crawl, and you are seized and buried in the nethermost dungeon where your bones repose till the day of doom. Are you a practitioner at law? defy a lie, spurn the hypocrite, and your office is likely to be as free from clients as is an ice chest of flies. Are you a physician? come out for a single hour from the schools; shake your fist in the face of a professorship; present to the world a new system of medicine, and find your body stretched later on the dissecting table of your brothers of the craft, where they search with curiosity for some fatal defect in that highly unstable mass in your cranium which, for want of a better term, they call your brain. Are you a clergyman? dare to pierce the mask of some orthodoxy or other; look forth upon your congregation with unspectacled eyes; it is your last glance. Quick as lightning are you pierced with the

javelins of scorn shot from hundreds of glittering orbs; slain like a prisoner by the mob; mangled beyond recognition, excommunicated, extinguished. Are you a statesman? dig your own grave, purchase your coffin, array yourself in the clothes of the tomb, then rail once and for all at license, and defend liberty with an inspired tongue once and for all; for at your right hand stands the undertaker, at your left the sexton. Your last cry is, "Truth or death," and echo, from the tombstone before you answers — "Death."

No man dare, we say, speak the whole truth; nor is there need in this world of woe; but should you elect to be a master, and shake the earth to its foundations for well-nigh two thousand years, enter the Nazareth where you were reared; go into the temple, unroll the scroll of the prophets, and declare that you bring a message unto your very own. Fool! the world will tremble afterward with perpetual quakes, but not till it has first devoured you and

cursed the message that you brought. A pioneer rarely, if ever, steps over the borders of an El Dorado at once; or if he get among the flowers of Eden so easily, the serpent destruction is inevitably there. A deed worth doing is one to die for; the higher the stakes the more desperate the game. Would you carry, as Jesus did, the weight of nineteen hundred years of glory on your back, you must needs disguise it in the shape of a cross. Would you cry out in a voice that echoes on in the centuries, you necessarily talk over the heads of your own special race, and far away from the ears of your kith and kin. Many know truth and keep silent about it; and they have this supreme right. But if one assume the rôle of a public teacher, standing up in the temple and speaking with authority, he challenges the consequences and throws down the gauntlet. A tiny minority of one, he faces the outraged mob of the world's majority single handed, and is doomed to be temporarily mastered as surely as might prevails and numbers over-

ride. His reward, you ask, whence is it? In his heart, let us answer, and somewhere else. Conscience means knowledge. The master realizes that as surely as the next day's sun appears over the border of dawn, he, too, will rise again. No immortal has ever yet sunk into the arms of oblivion, or remained in the musty confines of the tomb. No stone ever yet was so heavy, where a Jesus was buried, that some heaven-sent angel has not rolled it away. The Wise know this; and a master is wise. If a poet, he writes with the red ink of his veins for the universal, and is condemned by the special; a man of science calculates and invents for the whole world, and is starved to death by his particular race; a seer is born again in the fulfillment of his prophecy, and the rocks that crush him to-day rise as a monument to his memory in time to come.

"Seven cities fought for Homer dead,
Through which the living Homer begged his daily bread."

A wise man courts silence and dreams the

dream of peace, or shouts the truth to earth, in whose breast he is prematurely buried, and over which he reigns in the centuries ahead.

A man who dares to speak, who digs up fundamentals and hurls them like polished bowlders at the heads of the crowd, who pitches facts, like pointed javelins, right and left in a promiscuous throng, whose parables are tornadoes, whose metaphors are thunderstorms, whose anathema is forked lightning, and whose rush of language is a whirlwind;—such a man, we say, has time by the forelock and the centuries in his grasp.

Reward! What Nirvana sweetness or Edenic bliss compares with the joy which the crown of ignominy excites, when its blood-stained spikes and dripping thorns transform themselves to bay. Reward! Though Nazareth reject him, the unborn cities of the world are his. Though the Jew forsake him, a million Gentiles bow the knee. Reward! He drinks the contents of the cup and drains the dregs; and, drinking, discovers it is wine.

VI

POOR AND RICH

BEFORE beginning to investigate the philosophy of Jesus, we desire to make one broad, sweeping statement as to how we intend to deal with it; and having cleared the atmosphere in which we propose to breathe, we leave you to judge for yourselves as to the result. All great masters teach in two ways, or, to state it more clearly, from two premises: one, fundamental, universal, final; the other, secondary, special, relative; alternating from the poles of being, variety, and unity. Zoroaster, Gautama, and Jesus were no exceptions to this rule. Zoroaster, apparently a dualist, was in another sense a monist. Gautama taught Mahayana and Hinayana, or the great and little way, utterly opposed to each other, yet one and the same at the point of meeting. Jesus dealt

with the fundamentals and secondaries, or the world and the Jew, which might be translated into the general and particular.

Now in making research into the Four Gospels for a consistent philosophy, we shall avoid all local specialization, hunting only for his generalizations, which depend not a whit on social conditions, times, or races, but apply to all ages, all peoples, and all environments. We will travel along the luminous Mahayana of Jesus, and if we discover Pythagoras, Plato, and Gautama on the same march, we shall feel no surprise nor embarrassment. Once and for all, then, while we shall seem apparently to skim over the Four Gospels, in reality we shall dive; and when we come up from the level bottom of the ocean of truth, we shall shake off the froth and foam of the surface waves, draw a full breath of universal air, and dive again. Having explained our position, or apparently erratic method, we hope to be better understood.

In this quagmire of secondary causations

and localizations have most of our theologians stumbled; getting particulars and generals inextricably mixed, and making out of the simple narratives of the disciples a puzzle that even old China would find hard to unravel.

From the fact of their mistaking unity for variety, and the genus man for localized peoples, has come innumerable sects, creeds, and wars, in a sense as emphatic to-day as in times past.

Men are forever wondering what Jesus would do in this, that, or the other position, dragging him, with the cross upon his back, out of the broad field of universal law, into the mêlée and petty peccadillos of a sectarian contest. If one knows Law, — which the Master says he came not to destroy but to fulfill, — he has no need to ask, "What would Jesus do?" Out of this query comes the clash and crash of debate. Let us tell you emphatically that one who knows Law is, in the loftiest sense, beyond and above debate. He is a fool who seeks to overthrow

with his tongue a demonstrated theorem of Geometry, or an axiomatic dictum of Astronomy. We ask not, then, what Jesus would do, but what, on the contrary, he has revived and cleared up in law. How much of fundamental truth did he discover, and how did he proceed to apply and prove it? What apparent hypothesis did he transform into a fact, what theory did he demonstrate to be truth, what riddle did he guess, what sphinx strangle? This is our work, and we have no other.

If you turn to Chapter V of Matthew, you will find what is called the Sermon on the Mount; then to Luke, Chapter VI, and you will discover the Sermon on the Level Plain, — the word for Mount covering both; the symbolism, it seems to us, is exquisite.

The Maha Maru, or mountain top, stands in Oriental conception for the height of mind. Eastern nations invariably locate their gods upon high places. Some Himalayan peak, Olympus, or Fuji Yama is selected as the ideal abode, typical of that clear expansive

thought and comprehension of which the great are capable.

The level plain, on the contrary, stands for equality. One who speaks from the level of others or slightly below, having to lift up his eyes toward his disciples, can never be accused of talking over their heads, or far away from their power of comprehension. Note, then, the master is both above and below, — he knows polarity; ascending first higher than the crowd, to later descend lower, so that in speaking he must needs lift up his eyes. From the heights and depths, then, he utters this sweeping generalization which is axiomatic forever and forever: —

"Happy the destitute in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens."

One meaning can be deduced from this statement, namely: That he who is bereaved, having had nothing or having lost that which he once had, he that is spiritually destitute, with no place nor person to love, cheated of opportunities for self-improvement such as most men have, ignorant, lack-

ing in talent, or a genius which bears fruit, — in plain language, poor as to mental development and reciprocated love, — such a one has the kingdom of heaven. This seems, on its face, absurd, but let us see. In the first place the Master did not state that there is no other paradise save the kingdom of the poor in spirit. He neither posits nor denies that there are many heavens, even the seventh. He simply says: "Happy the destitute in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens," and we fully believe by the law of antithesis that this is easily demonstrated.

Suppose a homeless individual with little creative imagination, one who lives simply and naturally in a world of objectivities, be arrested in one of his aimless walks by the charm and fragrance of another man's garden. He leans on the fence, lazily, contentedly, and fills his soul to the brim with the glamour of it. He breathes the perfume till his senses are drunk, he gloats on the color and revels in the sound; for the garden

speaks through the bees and the birds. He has no ownership in the favored spot, save that of all mortals in beauty which the eyes steal and ears capture in spite of crown grants and absolute deeds; and with this lack of documental possession comes also a freedom from legal responsibility. He gets the essence of the garden with none of its cares. He takes from it that which is worth having and coolly ignores the rest. When its beauty palls he walks on forgetting that it is. He is like Zephyr; he kisses the flowers, and his kisses are thoughtless farewells. Duty somehow steers clear of him; he has nothing to lose, and that which he finds is of a nature so universal that he has but a minimum of responsibility in regard to it. He takes but little thought of the morrow, because being poor in spirit he has but few talents to exercise. He is, to speak simply, not in demand; nobody wants him, even as a drudge. He is to a degree incapable, and a "good riddance" is shouted after him wherever he goes. He is rarely sought by news-

paper men or theatrical managers, for he is singularly lacking in wit. Aphrodite will have none of him; the other sex become positive in his unattractive presence. Even the parish priest avoids him, for he gives nothing toward church support or the sacred cause of missions. Men of brain order him off the street, and men of brawn drive him thence. In a sense, he knows trouble, for the gates of the kingdom of heaven often shut with a clang; yet in spite of this he is ever catching glimpses such as few others know. The poetic justice of it all lies in the fact that nature is bound to strike a balance somehow, and the man of destitute spirit is so distressingly poor that it takes the very kingdom of heaven itself to even matters with him. His case is so hopeless from the point of human help that the universe must necessarily come, without stint or grudge, to his aid. His faith, being superlative, seems to the busy bees of the world's hive laughable and absurd. They forget that a mother especially cherishes her unfortunate chil-

dren; the first flow of her milk is theirs. Almighty maternity, finding the being poor in spirit so small, needs must make this lack up to him eternally. He is her own, her very own, nor is he weaned through the ages. There is no escaping this law, for it is that of equilibration. A balance in nature is approximately struck somewhere, somehow, forever and forever. Compensation is but another name for a principle which it took a Jesus to clear up.

The poor have a negative wealth, and the rich a negative poverty. The poor escape the duties which wealth entails and get a sort of universal heaven in lieu of a special mansion. The rich groan under their weight of gold while finding a certain creative rapture which the poor in spirit never feel. The one comes close to the universal, the other knows the prolific charm of the individual. The rich in spirit drink the cup of ecstasy to the dregs, and the cup of bitterness as well; the poor know no such rapture, for the kingdom of their heaven is like a

dreamy vale or summer sea; no tempests turn it into chaos, nor tornadoes into hell. The air in this paradise is balmy, while rural beauty soothes the sluggish soul to sleep.

Passion in a tragic sense knows naught of it, nor has a desperate Cupid in his erratic flight ever alighted 'mid its level plains. Mountains it has none, nor rushing streams, nor sublime gorges — universal, level, tender — where suns are ever rising and setting, and dawn and evening with their neutral charm fill the soul with mezzotints, transforming the sky's vivid blueness into a mist of gray. Here dwell the poor in spirit like children free from care.

To sum up, then, whether Jesus meant by the destitute in spirit that which we interpret, or something else, he certainly taught the law of contraries or compensation. For though his idea of the destitute in spirit might have been different from ours, whatever it was it was compensated by his idea of heaven which also might have been far away from our interpretation of the same.

Whatever, then, was his conception of destitution of spirit, and the kingdom of heaven, his idea of the law of opposites was identical with that of every great master of psychics and physics that ever lived.

Fundamental truth changes not with the ages; and Jesus, when he spoke from the level plain with uplifted eyes, but reiterated the sermon of Laotsze, who taught two hundred years after his own death through the medium of Chaung Yzu, thus: —

"Perfect happiness is the absence of happiness."

VII

A SERIES OF CONTRARIES

CHAPTER V of Matthew: —

"Happy the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."

"Happy are they who mourn; for they shall be comforted."

"Happy they who hunger and thirst for righteousness; for they shall be filled."

"Happy the merciful; for they shall receive mercy."

"Happy the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

"Happy the peacemakers; for they the sons of God shall be called."

"Happy they who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness; for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens."

"Happy are ye, whensoever they may reproach you and persecute you, and say every evil thing against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and exult, because your reward is great in the heavens; for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you."

As you will readily see these aphorisms

present a series of contrasts and imply polarity. Now polarity means opposition, or action and reaction. A man then driven to one extreme by the law finds the other. If he experience the ebb, he must necessarily rise to the flow.

It is not essential for us to analyze each one of these texts to find the identity of contraries. If we discover the head of a snake, we have no need to make a guess about the tail; we are sure of it, though it be hid. If there is one extreme to the reptile, there must be the other, and yet there is but one snake. His caudal and cranial extremities, with opposing functions, are nevertheless two ends of the same thing.

It is rather singular that so common a truth as the law of opposites should be uncommon; nevertheless this is so and it requires all the genius of a Laotsze in philosophy to open the eyes of the world to the fact. Air is so universally distributed over the earth that it attracts but little attention; children, possibly, are not aware of such a

combination of gases at all. And so it is with the law, that by its very commonness drugs mankind into unconsciousness regarding it; or if realized intellectually, it is seldom used consciously in practice. A Newton comes forth and declares the law of gravitation, accompanying his declaration with a mathematical demonstration; yet previous to his assertion, apples fell to the ground and attraction and repulsion were. Confucius gets hold of the ancient "Book of Changes" and adds to it a large number of demonstrated formulas; yet before Confucius or the later exponents of the same truth, Spencer and Tyndall, the law of rhythm was. That Jesus should assert with emphasis, "Happy are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," is singular only from one point of view; simply this — that he himself placed so much stress upon it.

A law is in a sense concealed and in another revealed. The old earth moves along and around so rapidly that she seems to be utterly still. Man might well say there is

no motion, when in reality he is experiencing all motion. Thus is it with a law; it is lost to man's conception in its universality; he becomes unaware of that of which he is all-conscious, till a genius rouses him to the fact that by blending himself in law as he does, he approximately loses individuality also. Jesus was wise. He found ignorance before him in the guise of poverty, sickness, indiscretion, misery; and he said unto himself, "If these apparently lost individuals knew the law of their situation, if they but understood the nature of being, they would extract from this very condition the opposing sweet which foils the bitter. How shall I make it plain? They can neither think nor philosophize; logic is to them an unmeaning term. I will speak with authority; I will voice an eternal principle and prove it before their very eyes. I, myself, will become one of them and demonstrate that suffering in all these forms finds its other pole in joy."

Upon this he became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, hungry, naked,

homeless, without a place to lay his head; and in this plight stood boldly on the mountain, or looked upward from the level plain and declared himself supremely happy. Let us gaze down the path of history, peering right and left to discover if possible other great thinkers who were of similar mind to this immortal "Lion of Judah."

In the dim past there lived, or it is said there lived, a man called Pythagoras. He was a Greek of the Greeks, and is so far lost in the realm of mystery that his identity has been disputed without dimming a whit the historical significance of the name that stands for him. The idea of number being the central thought in Pythagorean philosophy, the conception of harmony or unity is a necessary corollary, and unity and duality being in opposition, a series of arbitrary contraries is the inevitable result.

There were ten fundamental opposites according to this school, namely: limited and unlimited, odd and even, right and left, masculine and feminine, rest and motion, straight

and crooked, light and darkness, good and evil, square and oblong, one and many; opposites implying unity or harmony, therefore one and the same. As we all know, the school of Pythagoras was far back, being at a good guess somewhere about 580 years before Christ. To be sure there had been other philosophers in Greece previous to his appearance. Thales was called one of the seven wise men, Anaxamander, the second of the Ionian school and pupil of Thales, was also a thinker, and they had both appeared some years before Pythagoras flashed his philosophy of numbers athwart the mental horizon.

The Greeks being Greeks and in a sense specialists, dealt more with variety than unity, and therefore realized number far better than its other pole. However, we are not making this research for the sake of argument, but simply to show how far back in Hellenic philosophy the great truth, the identity of contraries taught by Jesus, was promulgated by the school of Pythagoras.

Now it is well known that the Essenes, the mystics of the Jewish sect, were in a sense Neopythagoreans, and Jesus, it is presumed, came strongly under the influence of these same Essenes, Apollonius of Tyana being also another who spread the Pythagorean idea. In fact the Neoplatonic philosophy, as well as the Jewish, was highly colored by Pythagoreanism, and Jesus simply put it into practice at a time when it was apparently hermetic. As we have previously mentioned Laotsze, the Chinese mystic, let us say here that he was practically contemporaneous with Pythagoras, having been born about 604 B.C.; and that in Tao-teh King, of which he was the probable author, he taught the identity of contraries seeming to deal more with unity than number, thereby reversing the process of Pythagoras. That the fallacies of Taoism sprang from the misrepresented Tao of Laotsze is no more surprising than that the superstitions of Christianity came from the misconception of the teachings of Jesus.

It would seem from this historical research

that the Orient and Occident were at work on the two poles of the one principle at about the same time; the former teaching generalization and the latter specialization not only as speculative philosophy but as a practical one also; making of it in its finality a religion; building in its honor temples and places of worship; in fact, seizing upon it as a basic principle, soul inspiring and complete.

The Sermon on the Mount, then, or that on the level plain, but set forth and expounded the identity of contraries as applied to practical life, and was no new exposition after all. Those shallow investigators who make claim that Jesus foisted a new religion and an unheard-of philosophy upon the world, are far away from the truth and betray a prejudice inexcusable to the mind of science. The only newness there was in the teaching of the King of the Jews lay in the man himself. He was he. All masters are mighty as individuals; the identity of a Jesus includes not only his Unit of Energy, but his

environment as well; and this in a sense is ever changing and new.

Pythagoras towered over Thales and shocked the world with the utterance of a fundamental truth. The "Ancient of Days," expounded by the founder of Greek philosophy, flashed out like a new-born sun. Lao-tsze took China to task and spake but the Tao, whereupon Confucius bowed his head and trembled. The old had become young. Jesus revolutionized the Levant when he modernized the hoary axiom, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."

Whether there are the ten fundamental opposites of Pythagoras or more, there is no denying that the identity of contraries was at the base of Greek philosophy, as well as that of the Chinese. Nor can we escape the fact that the Pythagorean school, through the Neoplatonic and afterward the teachings of the mystic Jew, was the rock upon which the true philosophy, called Christian, was afterward built.

Like a diamond repolished, each time the

jewel of this principle is exposed to the sun through the means of a Laotsze, a Pythagoras, or a Jesus, it flashes various lights according to its environment and adjustment; and each time ignorance pronounces it new and something unheard of in the history of man.

Though speculative philosophers have been ceaselessly dabbling with this very law under the guise of the paradox, the startling spectacle of a master, proceeding to demonstrate it by actual practice, is something beyond the power of ignorance to understand. What wonder then that Laotsze was the first, Pythagoras the first, Jesus the first, to the amazed mass of humanity that had forgotten its past.

That history repeats itself even to the reappearance of its philosophic Master is hardly comprehended by the world, and when the "Man" appears, Ignorance pronounces him anthropomorphic God.

VIII

OLD PERSIA

WHETHER Zoroaster were the first of the Magi or not, the Magi themselves were responsible for that so-called magic which has caused mischief and foolishness to run rampant in this credulous world of ours since history was young.

The Magi were Medes and their religion probably originated in Bactria in the east of Iran.

The old illustration of a muddy stream starting in a crystal-clear spring will bear repeating again and again. The priests of Persia undoubtedly fouled the river of thought that sprang fresh and pure from the fountain head of the Zoroastrian mind. The dualism given out by them as a fundamental idea of this ancient religion is proof positive

that they were not working from the substratum of principle, where the Master himself undoubtedly labored. Later teachers of this ancient cult, however, saw the rock upon which their mythical founder had built and declared the apparent Two of Zoroaster to be in reality co-eternal; twins necessarily resultant from the one law of universality or balance; inseparable polarities such as negative and positive, good and evil.

But the Magi worked mischief and bred confusion, being dealers in Theurgy, Astrology, and innumerable absurdities that deceived a superstitious people and bred in them unreasonable beliefs that tell through heredity even to this day; for superstition lurks in the modern heart, in spite of the sarcastic scathings of Science and the prose language of Fact. In face of this assertion, however, we are glad to state that the Magi were not altogether evil; undoubtedly there were priests among them who were genuine wonder-workers, pure of heart and lofty of aim; wise men in every sense of the word

who scorned to sell their powers for gold, bartering sacred truth about like vulgar merchandise. Of course, as you all know, a sage is inevitably a magician, and the unclean priest is but a poor attempt at an imitation.

When the mother Mede, then, brought forth the Magi, she produced a double-faced prodigy; its one countenance white and the other black.

"But what does its black face represent?" you ask. Should we answer you according to our understanding, we should undoubtedly offend those of the innumerable students of the occult who presume to notice us at all; yet will we reply, not hinging the value of what we say upon ourselves as authorities, but upon the inherent truth, which, if sifted fairly, we believe will be found in our answer. Notice, then, — the black face of this strange child of the Magi stands to some extent for Astrology.

Astrology flourished in Persia and was nourished by the Magi. Do not misunder-

stand us; we believe that each thing affects every other thing and every other affects each, there is not a grain of sand but tells on the rest of the universe; and the rule works both ways. This is the clinching argument of the astrologist, palmist, and others of the same stamp, and we accept it. It is law. But we object to their method of applying it, and demand some sort of evidence of their so-called demonstrations. While every star that rises in heaven subtly affects every mortal on earth, we deny that man has yet discovered the exquisite finesse with which this is done. That Saturn fixes his malignant eye upon an innocent victim and foretells by a prophetic wink a future catastrophe that shall occur at some fixed period, even specifying the details of the event, is a method too gross for the subtle soul of so marvelous a star.

Necromancy, conjuring, fortune-telling, and all their modern kin, belong largely to the black face of magic, especially when asserted as a science and bartered for coin.

"But the white face of magic — what is it?" you ask. We have but one answer. Lofty occultism is superlative wisdom which by its very nature must necessarily dominate ignorance and appear to the superstitious as nothing other than magic. Whatever in black magic really succeeds is also due to wisdom as truly as though its motive were admirable rather than debasing. The psychic or mental power, however, is largely that quick induction and deduction which is based on a premise of eternal memory; reasoning so rapid in its action, that it seems not to be reasoning at all, but is called by that misunderstood term "intuition." The psychic power is that upon which all successes of either black or white magician are based; it is one and the same law manifesting under many guises and names.

But what about the topography of this old Persia that brought forth the Magi, with a possible Zoroaster as its head? You will notice if you study the map of this strange land that it is largely a desert, though at the north

where it contracts European influence through the means of the Caspian Sea it is bounded by mountains. At the south are the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Ormuz, making a clear waterway connection with India. The Iranian plateau, though one of the chief centers of historical interest, is scarcely four hundred miles wide from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf. Its coasts are unhealthful and its highlands almost inaccessible. Its inhabitants are, comparatively speaking, few in number; the whole population scarcely exceeding ten millions.

A great portion of the land is a desert, and most of its historical scenes have been enacted on the narrow belt betwixt the Elburz and Susiana mountains. There is a strip of coast land lying between the hills and the Caspian, forming two provinces called Ghilan and Mazanderan. This particular spot is wonderful in natural beauty and entirely different from the desert sections below, seeming more a part of Caucasia than of Iran.

From this hint of an Eden about ten miles in width and three hundred and fifty in length, the Persians have drawn a dualistic symbol rather different from that which we would naturally expect. They call this apparently favored country, the land of evil; undoubtedly on account of certain disparaging conditions hinging upon its locality, and possibly because the dry section appeals to them from a sanitary standpoint.

Viewed from some lofty peak, the great salt desert of Persia is like a brazen sea, shining in red, uncanny tints, fiercely challenging a still more brazen sun that glares down upon it with malignant stare. Lut, the terrible! To the eye it seems a seething ocean of red metal with nowhere a suggestion of shadow or a touch of green, save in the dim lavender uplands that far away skirt its uncertain edge. Is it any wonder that a land of extremes like this historical Iran, bearing upon its breast the poisoned gems of Mazanderan and Ghilan that foil eternally the awful desolation of the desert land of

Lut, — is it any wonder, we ask, that the people seize instinctively upon the principle of dualism symbolized by their mother soil, forgetting the unity that makes it one from sea to sea; leaving this discovery to the towering genius of Zoroaster and those of the Magi nearest his heart?

"But what has this peep into Persia and this fraternizing with the wise to do with Jesus of Nazareth?" Simply this. It is a plunge into history to find a certain identity of thought between the two Masters, the apparent difference lying mostly in the environment which was theirs; also to discover the source of the Magi, and the attitude of Jesus toward magic, particularly its dark and unwholesome face.

In Mark, Chapter VIII, we find: "And straightway entering into the boat with his disciples, he came into the parts of Dalmanutha. And forth came the Pharisees and began to be discussing with him; seeking from him a sign from the heaven, — tempting him. And deeply sighing in his spirit, he

says, Why is this generation seeking a sign? Verily, I say to you there shall not be given to this generation a sign."

Matthew XVI, i–iv: "And the Pharisees and Sadducees, coming near, tempting, requested him a sign out of the heaven to exhibit to them. But he answering said to them, When evening comes, ye say, Fair! for fiery is the heaven. And at morn, To-day a storm! for fiery though sad is the heaven. The face of the heaven, indeed, ye learn to distinguish, but the signs of the seasons ye cannot. An evil and adulterous generation is seeking after a sign, and a sign will not be given it, — save the sign of Jonah. And, leaving them behind, he departed."

It is true that in spite of this assertion Jesus is supposed to have worked magic; but you will notice, if the accounts are of any value, that he sometimes said after having electrified the multitude with an apparent miracle, — "Go and tell no man." He evidently desired to escape the necessity of making the sign his credential, being grieved that the ignorance of the people necessitated such an exhibition.

If one studies the great teachers impartially and without prejudice, he will find

that they catered somewhat to the weaknesses of those beneath them, in order to save them to themselves. Whether this be jesuitical or not, it is hard to determine. It is a method somewhat revolting to science but most generally condoned by religion. Science shows no quarter and has no heart. Religion, on the contrary, wins through sympathy and appeals to the emotions.

Jesus was dealing with childish ignorance, — giving the people a philosophy translatable into religion. Were you to instruct a three-year-old infant about gravitation, you would in no probability take him on your knee and whisper into his ear the Newtonian Law that, "the attraction of the sun upon the planets varies inversely as the squares of their distances." On the contrary you would throw something down rather heavily, telling him at the same time to be careful about falling himself. This seems to be the only way in which ignorance is ever reached.

The debatable question, then, is this: Shall we let the ignorant alone, or lead them up-

ward through the maze of white and black magic, till, foolish no longer, they reach the glittering crag of scientific thought, and learn to battle for themselves, irrespective of church, master, or creed.

IX

"WOMAN, WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH THEE?"

THE Raja Suddhodana of the Sakyas, who lived in clear view of the majestic Himalayas and not far from the temple city of Benares, had married Mahamaya and brought her to Kapilavastu.

In the forty-fifth year of her age, while traveling to the home of her parents, she gave birth to her son, the coming Buddha, known under the family name of Gautama, and individually as Siddartha. At nineteen he married Yasodhara, and lived for the living's sake, indulging in sensual luxury and drinking the wine of life to its dregs; in fact, he was so devoted to his own happiness that complaints were made to the raja, for it was feared that his effeminate indolence would incapacitate him for action in time of war. The young prince, hearing this,

proved his physical prowess and also his learning by an exhibition of his powers and silenced the complaining tongues of his relatives forever.

One day, the story reads as though spun from a web of gossamer, he beheld a man, in every sense of the word old; on another occasion, one foul with disease; again, a rotting corpse; later on, a calm and stately ascetic. Puzzled, the prince asked his charioteer, Channa, the meaning of all this and learned that the end of life was misery, decay, and death.

Gautama went by himself with his problem and thought. In the midst of his musings he received news that his wife had brought forth a son. "This," said he, "is a new and strong tie I shall have to break."

But the exultant populace received their prince with an ovation; and in the evening the nautch dancers made revelry for the guests and filled the palace with life. At midnight, waking and realizing that the dancing girls were lying in the anteroom,

Siddartha, filled with disgust at his previous animal proclivities, was roused to activity, say the accounts, and, like a man told that his house is on fire, he called for Channa and ordered his horse. Then opening the door where his wife, Yasodhara, slept with the child on her arm, he gazed irresolutely upon them a moment, then turned sadly away as though he himself were the unworthy one, and not privileged to have and hold them until he had reached that high state of enlightenment that should make him a Buddha, or, in other words, the manifestation of Truth.

There is something behind and beyond this of which the accounts fail to speak, — the myth, or the true story, whichever it may be, is tremendous with fact or law, according to one's point of view, and applies to every would-be Buddha to-day as surely as it did to this awakened prince of the Sakyas in the fifth century before Christ. It is founded upon the truism that he only is fit to have who can go without. He only shall realize the positive who can compre-

hend the negative. He alone may revel in desire who is equal to that condition which we shall call desirelessness. He alone may be allowed to act who understands the moving poise of apparent nonaction which is akin to the dream of Nirvana.

"Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Man, suddenly awakened to the fact that his peace of mind depends upon anything or any one, immediately becomes unsettled and a prey to anxiety, pessimism, or, in another word, — wretchedness. He stares into an open grave all day and dreams of a corpse at night. He bids fictitious farewells each hour, and robed in sackcloth sits down in ashes as though funerals were the only ceremonials, and sorrow his inseparable companion. Such a man is a slave to things or persons; if it is Somewhat that is so utterly essential, his soul is staked upon it and serves it as would a vassal a lord. If it is Some one, this individual becomes to him a God, without whom annihilation were preferable.

The vast majority of men, alas! are maintained in their apparent power by innumerable bolstering supports, and appear to the angels above like tottering pillars of marble braced on all sides. Now and then a human being stands practically alone, his line of perpendicular managed by himself, an approximately erect figure, steady even in a storm and equal to the shock of misfortune that fails to throw him down. Physically he may be overcome; aye, even mentally, but as long as he is he, having realized the true unit of himself, he towers a spiritual master unassailable and complete. By this we mean his supreme and absolutely free will or desire will ever be true, in its consciousness, to the universality in himself. If a man once realizes that in him is the possibility of all, and that whatever he loves and wants is his, whether or no, visible or invisible, tangible or not tangible, — if once he grasps this tremendous fact, he is little moved by apparent loss and temporary estrangement, nor is he upset by time,

space, or sad farewells. He knows that the final realization of Somewhat or Some one is in himself; and his chief desire is to fully explore and develop that mystic realm where the loved in reality are.

"Woman, what have I to do with thee?" As Prince Siddartha gazed with enlightened eyes upon his wife, he realized that she was a stranger. Hitherto he had reveled in her exterior charms, but that depth of womanhood, covered by a mesh of veils, that subtle negative which thus far was virgin, that wondrous feminine, the heart, that profound subjectivity with its intuitional certainties, — what knew he of this? He had gazed upon the surface only of woman's eyes, their depths he had never beheld.

"Woman, what have I to do with thee?" "Where in me," might Siddartha have said, "is that sleeping potency, that masculine force and dynamic energy that alone is correlative to its receptive self-woman? Till the winged insect bursts its cocoon, till the potential becomes active, — until then —

farewell. Aye, more — till I find thee in myself so that without thee I am with thee, and with thee without thee, till the last is first and the first last — farewell — farewell."

The coming Master begins his initiation by giving up. One after another things treasured are sacrificed, till finally love itself — a bleeding heart — is laid upon the altar.

The Nazarene once said, "But be seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." He that aspires to mastership should know full well that when he grows to his complete stature in being, he has power to gather in again all that which he has cast out; and more — to hold that which he has gathered.

Gautama sat disconsolate under the Bo tree. He had given up all — his kingdom, his wife, his son, the very garments upon his back. Ragged, hungry, without a roof save the blue arc of India's sky and the interlaced leaves of the sacred tree, without a seat

other than the cold lap of earth, — here alone his five disciples having left him in his distress, he threw himself upon himself, and storming his citadel of Thought, he demanded the Reason of the reasons, the Law of the laws. With a will aroused by desperation he summoned that tremendous Logic that had slept in his brain since his birth, to come to the front and clear a path through the wilderness in which he was lost. With the sharp blades of deduction and induction he cut here and there, till the great highway, the Mahayana, lay spread before him in a long perspective, merging at last into the very blue of heaven.

Then the "king of kings" arose to his feet, his enlightened eyes gazing ahead over coming peoples and times, and backward upon the seemingly buried past. Through induction he had grasped a principle which bore, in its ever pregnant womb, a multiple phenomenon, that seeming to be many was in reality one. He had discovered the "I

AM," and knew that the whole, himself, was an ever changing manifestation of its parts. He had found that subtle Nirvana or poise, by which, like an acrobat, he might seemingly balance on nothing while realizing that Something that makes for life. The butterfly had burst its shell, the bird had flown from its nest, the universal had emerged from the particular, the dead lived. Gautama cast one mental glance of recognition at the highest peak of the Himalayas and passing out from beneath the boughs of the Bo tree, stood in full glare of the rising sun whose splendors he challenged with his own enlightened eyes, — a Buddha.

In Syria once another Master was questioned by his disciple: "Peter began to be saying to him, Behold! we left all and have followed thee." Jesus, answering said, "Verily I say to you, No one is there who left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for the sake of me, and for the sake of the joyful message, except perchance he receive an

hundred fold now in this season, — houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mother, and children, and lands, with persecutions, — and in the age that is coming, life age-abiding. Many first, however, shall be last; and the last first."

At the marriage in Cana it is recorded in the second chapter of John, that, the wine failing, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine! And Jesus says to her, What to me and to thee, Woman? Not yet has come mine hour!"

One need not be oversubtle to discover the identical principle underlying the philosophy of these two Masters, Gautama and Jesus, regarding the law of opposition or the everlasting parallelism of contraries. Compensation is only discoverable through contrast. A true realization of a good is made possible by the absence of it. To be last is to understand its antithesis, the first. However otherwise these two peerless teachers may have differed, whatever flaws are discoverable in the cult of either, they never-

theless built upon a fundamental truth which is identical.

Through two thousand years the priests of Indian mysticism and Indian jugglery as well have been unable to gather rubbish enough to bury the Mahayana of Gautama, though Buddhism in its march has passed practically out of India to thrive in other lands.

The foremost expounders of the cult of Gautama crossed the Chinese border and over seas to the adjacent islands, later passing the trackless waste of the Pacific, and setting foot on the extreme edge of the Western world; where, somehow, as though the Prince of the House of David and the prospective King of the Sakyas had so planned it, these opposing cults of Christianity and Buddhism, symbolized by their invisible heads, strike hands under a western sky as though no hiatus of centuries lay between them, nor differences of race were at their backs.

The Tripitaka, with its wealth of commen-

tary and profundity of lore, out of which are gleaned the sayings of Gautama, spoken as he walked in the deer gardens of Benares, is piled above and around, in its numerous volumes, the humble little book containing the Four Gospels, so small in compass and so emphatic in power. We read from both consecutively, and the lines of one melt and blend into those of the other, till we forget the hydra head of Orthodoxy and the Janus face of Theology. Dogma becomes a forgotten word as the fundamental verities get us in grasp. Cant, phraseology, sectarianism, all fade and vanish before the glare of the Sun of Truth eternal, which dazzles us to blindness regarding the trivial differences of secondary investigators. Self-evident truth has so startled us with its axioms, and so enamored us with its constancy, that we forget at last even the great Teachers who gave their lives for it, and seizing upon principle for principle's sake, we place our Bibles upon the shelf, roll the scroll of our Tripitaka, and kissing the finger-tips of our

Masters, turn our backs upon all and go alone beneath the sky to prove the gold of the axiom with the touchstone of logic; and, reborn through the marriage of the Intellect and Heart, sally forth into life, to have and to hold that which is ours as against the world.

X

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

We used in the last chapter the text from the old translation of the New Testament, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" not especially for the reason that Jesus meant what that version might imply, when he addressed his mother, but because the giving up of woman by man, and vice versa, is the supreme sacrifice; consequently the best illustration that can possibly be chosen of that isolation which the individual must necessarily bear ere he is worthy of the delight of the ownership of things, or the happiness of the love of persons.

To be sure, there is a love that is not the highest, and which may be won with very little self-sacrifice, but the heights imply the depths, and he who would run the whole

gamut of being must realize the extremes. Now the other pole of love and social happiness is isolation.

There is also a different aspect to this question. Man must *think alone*. He may receive suggestions and instructions from another, but the real battle ground of thought, where problems are solved and conclusions reached, is utterly lonely. Here the thinker wrestles with himself, and strikes hands with his conclusion, which is the only solution worth having, as far as he is concerned. No individual reaches full stature in being who leans in his thinking upon another; degrading himself to the extent that he allows some one else to do all this work for him. Undoubtedly in one short life man is unable to solve all the problems that present themselves, and must necessarily take many of them second-hand; accepting them agnostically and tentatively, till other lives or ages arrive when he may work them out. But this aside. Whatever thinking man intends to do must be done in isolation; and to get this isola-

tion all else for the time being must be dropped.

When Gautama bade his wife a silent farewell, he had already decided to solve the problem of problems, namely, "What is Truth?" To wrestle with such a sphinx on the desert of life, and force it to give up its secret, is to undertake a battle which, if he succeed in the contest, must necessarily make of him a master.

Gautama undoubtedly saw that Truth might be absolute or relative, as far as the understanding of man goes. To know Truth in its absolute sense is to know the laws and the Law of them, which necessitates unity and balance. Now to know the Law means simply to know that *it is*, and the manner of its changeless workings; this is all. No mortal has ever understood or ever will understand the innermost meaning of the Law. Man finds his limitations in the measure of his possibilities; and he is wise who knows what is thinkable and understandable, and what is not.

Gautama brought up against the Law, and felt that he had found the Never-Changing, the Unit, the One; which, while beyond, was yet in him. From the point of generalization he could go no farther. The innumerable laws which are the rules of varied combinations are made to harmonize by the Law of *them;* and this is Unity, the end of philosophy and the finality of reason; in other words, as far as understanding goes, *Absolute Truth.*

But relative truth, what of it? The truth which is not truth except conditionally; shifting as one's point of view changes and chameleon-like, altering in color from time to time.

Tempted by Brahman hierarchy and also through compelling heredity, he would naturally condemn this chameleon of Relative Truth as maya or illusion; but the subtle brain of Gautama went deeper; even relativity (true to the "law of the organic" which makes of Thing, Things) was to one of clear sight no illusion whatever. Rhythm,

the Key of it, once understood, proves changing relationships to be as accurate as mathematics, and illusive only to him who lives on the foam of the ocean of variety. Here Gautama made his great advance over the Brahman; conquering heredity or the faith bred in him, and overriding the dogma of the influential teachers of his time, he came forth to show the Mahayana student that even change is changeless, in that it is true to the law of itself which is rhythm. And while to the Hinayana student he preached maya, or illusion, bidding him search only for unity, to those deeper in the cult he taught the stupendous paradox of a constant variety, backed ever by the law of periodicity which is as changeless as God.

This of course makes the teaching of Gautama, the Buddha, somewhat puzzling to those who fail to discover in his numerous discourses his two or three methods or yanas, and that these different ways lead in the finality to one and the same result, namely, Buddha or Truth.

Five hundred millions of human beings at the unseen feet of Gautama the Bhagavat to-day, either from one extreme or the other, run the gamut of Buddhism, which is the scale of science and the rhythm of philosophy.

In Siam, Burmah, Ceylon, Chittagon, Aracan, the Hinayana is the beaten path over which Southern Buddhists travel from birth to death, while the broad way or Mahayana is well worn by millions whose homes are in Japan, China, Corea, Manchuria, and Thibet. Nevertheless the Buddhism of the two last-named places greatly differs in its origin from the Mahayana of Japan. It is really Lamaism, having traveled far from the pure and clear teachings of Gautama and Laotsze, and is only included with Northern Buddhism because of its greater resemblance to that than to the Hinayana of the South.

The word "Amidabutsu" is a Japanized form of the original Sanscrit or Pali, and literally means Boodh or Truth. Buddha, to the Western mind, generally takes on the

form of Gautama, but to the thinkers in the East it has a different significance. Statues are built to it. Buddhas in bronze or wood and stone are common in the Orient, and why?

The word has a triple meaning and implies three things. First, Truth, Reason, or Cause and Effect; second, the human expression of it; third, the Person who is aware of the same. Consequently while the word "Buddha" perfectly applies to Gautama, it correctly fits any human being who understands Universal Reason. Not only this, but every human being is a Buddha; for notwithstanding his unconsciousness of Reason, he has its highest potency and is governed by it; the only difference being that one is conscious and the other is not.

Not only man but animals and plants are Buddhas and act more or less according to truth. Finally each inorganic thing is a Buddha, equally governed by the same law that controls the higher and more conscious orders of life, the inanimate hav-

ing the potentiality of consciousness and animation.

No amount of the imaginary accumulation of nothing can make something; therefore all things in the universe, animate or potential, are Buddhas.

The image Amidabutsu stands out then as a symbol of eternal Truth. Buddha is Truth, and Truth is active or asleep in everything.

Once grasping this idea, we have in comprehension the paradoxes of Laotsze and Chuang Tzu, the Mahayana of Gautama and the synthesis of Spencer; thinkers far apart and personally unknown to each other, yet so fiery with the same truth that each in turn has revolutionized the race.

All deep students of the philosophy of Gautama know that its foundation rests on experience and inference, and that Nirvana is nothing but the adjustment of the Subject to the Object; Mind to Matter, or in other words, is balance or poise.

To crude humanity this is a mystery; a

natural veil which falls over the eyes of Ignorance, and is never lifted except by Logic and Fact.

The paradox of Buddhism lies in the reason that the two methods, namely, the Exoteric and the Esoteric, seem to be at war with each other and a contradiction; for while the Master exhorted the masses to kill desire, to the Initiate he preached life, or the meaning and use of desire.

The whole aim of his philosophy, however, was to come into consciousness of self; and to the unenlightened he taught self-abnegation, in order that by rebound they might strike full consciousness or complete life; the paradox meaning but action and reaction, which are always equal in psychics as well as in physics.

The two hundred and fifty moral precepts of the Hinayana, taught in the Agama Sutra, mean but the one principle of Mahayana taught in the Saddhama Pundarika Sutra.

The Hinayana is the practicing of precepts or rules, until by experience a revela-

tion of the law which evolved them becomes clear (an inductive method to climb to the principle on the ladder of experience). The Mahayana, on the contrary, reverses the whole process and descends the ladder from law to living.

Of course the subtle thinker knows very well that in considering the laws of nature, he is forced by the very necessity of the case to postulate a law of the laws, and this, by the Mahayana Buddhist, is called Ekayana.

Like Buddhism, Science can find no beginning on which to plant its first premise. Like Buddhism, Science can find no ending in which to drive home its final conclusion.

The spiral grows as naturally from Biology as from Buddhistic philosophy, and though all along the line of the varying circle of being, there seem to be points that might pass for beginnings, in reality they are but the ebb tide which follows the flow in the ocean of change.

Creation, then, is not taught by Gautama, unless by Creation is meant that infinite

variety which repeated combinations of the same things invariably produce.

What, then, is Truth? Science, after nearly two thousand years since Gautama, has found this same Absolute or Ultimate Unknowable realized in consciousness by the prince of the Sakyas; and with its incomparable inductive method, science has also cleared a path through the jungle of relativities which well matches the little way, or Hinayana of Gautama.

Let us turn to the Gospel of St. John, eighteenth chapter and thirty-eighth verse: "Pilate says to him, What is Truth?" for Jesus, who had anticipated the question, had previously said, "I to this end have been born, and to this end have come into the world, that I may testify to the truth."

The answer which a Jesus might make to this sphinx of a question could in no way be different, were he a Master, than that given by a Zoroaster, a Gautama, or a Herbert Spencer.

He who would solve this stupendous

problem, "What is Truth," must make up his mind first of all to not only get rid of prejudice, but to abandon many preconceived notions. The thinking of others is only tentative in value to one in this pursuit. Friends, relatives, country, love, must, for the time being, be abandoned; for the Ultimate brooks of naught save Itself, and so ingulfs particulars to the dazzled eye of one who looks upon It, that in blindness he can gaze no more. But not until he has been thus struck, as was Saul of Tarsus, by the lightning flash of the Absolute, is he ready to cleave his way through the tangled path of specialization, toward that which he previously abandoned and is now entitled to have.

Man, then, who seeks the naked Truth must give up all till he finds It. Imagine precious gems hid deep in the débris of an almost inaccessible waste; suppose a man in desperate need of them, what would he be most likely to do? The answer is simple; he would go alone in search of them, bidding

farewell to family and friends, undertaking the hardships, sacrifices, and dangers that unavoidably make things of value hard to acquire; his life even he would take in his hands.

So with the man desperate for Truth. And this excludes theological dabblers, dogmatic cranks, money makers, fakirs, pseudo-scientists, half-fledged philosophers, and superficial scholars. All these are too self-centered and weak to endure the radiant light of Truth, — naked and ultimate.

XI

NIRVANA

I STOOD beneath my own vine and fig tree and watched a bird as it pecked at the ants that were devouring the fruit. And while I watched I became conscious that my panther-like cat was creeping slowly, surely, crouching as he came, toward the bird, his eyes concentrated, deadly, and his attitude indicative of Fate, about to spring; but the bird, innocent in its sinning, for *it* symbolized Fate also, went on devouring the intelligent ants that in their turn were destroying my cherished fruit. Ah! with his nose to the ground, not a hundred yards away I descried the arch enemy of my cat, — a hound that hunted from vanity and love of his master's approval. The situation was strained, tragedy was rampant, when I, the

Fate of Fates, with a wave of my hand, sent the bird soaring, protected innumerable ants, distracted the fixed gaze of the cat that, discovering the dog, escaped unharmed.

Nirvana, said I, what of Nirvana? This little event, happening beneath my own vine, but symbolized life in variety, or the deadly effort of one species to not only protect itself against another, but to destroy and devour that other also. Still more, each would possess the earth, if possible, in its ignorant self-assertiveness, making claim to superiority over every other species upon it, believing in a sort of inexpressible way that this great round globe was made for it and it alone. And yet in the face of this, Nature strikes an approximate poise. Things in the universal adjust to each other, the apparent evil becoming neutralized. From the mountain peak of view, where cause and effect and time and space are in a sense lost, — or rather understood, — here from this Maha Meru of isolation, when something becomes all and all one, we reach a whole-

ness, the parts of which fit to each other in perfect accord.

Nirvana, I said, Nirvana! Must man soar away from the special to discover it? Must he fly, like the eagle, to the Andes of Mind, or seek some far-off star of heaven to poise on the outposts of the universal, that he may sweep with his telescopic eye the whole field of that tragic and soul-stirring expanse that teams with life?

When causes loom into the clear atmosphere of unclouded thoughts, effects are understood and reconciled, and evil, which to the ignorant means sickness, suffering, and death, tears off its hideous outer mask and betrays a fairer face which, while still mysterious, is consoling and divine.

But alas! one climbs but seldom to a mountain top. Even a master finds himself in the tangle of the wilderness, often hard pressed by the briers and thorns of specialization, lost in a maze of seeming contradictions that force him to think, as it were, for his life, all his power summoned to

his aid, in making a way out of this pathless maze. How, then, under such conditions, can he realize the sublime Nirvana, which means poise or adjustment of subject to object?

The Brahmin, staggered by the jungle of individualism, says despairingly: "Life is evil; let me escape these incessant transmigrations and reincarnations, and willingly will I lay down my individuality upon the bosom of the One."

"This struggle with desire, the gratification of which but increases its intensity; these loves which are like brilliant shining bees that sting; this insatiable ambition that would make ladders of human bodies on which to climb to the vaulted zenith of fame; this physical hunger that slaughters things weak and helpless and devours the slain; this elbow-jostling for standing room on the planet that brought us forth; this eye to eye hatred; this mouthing hypocrisy, — I hate it all, let me die."

But the Prince of the Sakyas bowed his

head and thought. "What is the logic of specialization?" said he. "The coward runs from difficulty and danger, and in the running loses the zest of life. May there not be, even here in this maze of heterogeneity, where Disease points a bony finger at the tomb, and Death stalks about in funeral robes, where Age withers in sunshine, and flowers are plucked in the bud, where Rhythm, disguised as Time, cuts down the human chaff and wheat indiscriminately, and Space, Time's eternal mate, is reeking with the foul gas of rottenness, — may there not be, even here, a law of adjustment in this pit of confusion, this chaos of individualism, this hotbed of selfishness, where no mountain peak of generalization looms, even here a possibility of balance, an attainment of approximate poise?"

"Nirvana! the adjustment of subject to object; even here, were I to plant myself in the center of this whirl of being so that mine eyes might look equally in all directions, even here I should perceive that the heart

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of it is calm. Can I but realize that I am I, and that the practical balance is myself which shall level the scale of being till it swings true to me — *me* — *me*, — if once I can encompass and am encompassed by the law that all things together, except myself, are no weightier than am I, then shall the consciousness of the Nirvana of specialization be realized, disclosing the jungle of particulars as an ever shifting panorama, which passes by, while I move not."

And speaking thus, out from among the Brahmins Gautama stepped, as a Jesus came forth from the midst of the Jews. "If the Nirvana be a law," said he to himself, "it will apply to life as surely as to death. Awake, let me put it to the test — asleep, I know it not."

And on the heels of this ancient Spencer, who turned transmigration into evolution, uniting the special to the general with the wedding knot, who made of dualism unity, — on his heels there came a throng of inductive reasoners that found, under the innumerable

data of accumulated facts and experiences, the underlying law of Nirvana, the masterly poise, such balance as relates the warring species of earth to each other in the very face of bitter hatred and certain death, and forces the black of life to blend into the white, while the sun in heaven shines.

I go out beneath the stars and look up. What frenzy, what fire, what activity in that vaulted blue above, and yet how calm! From the vantage point of my central self the scroll of the sky bears the stars on its unrolling pages as though they were painted there in dust of gold. In that sweep of space where motion is terrific, it is yet utterly still. Sirius, on fire with the ecstasy of speed, wheels onward to his inevitable goal, as though no Aldebaran or Hercules or Alcyone were studding the stainless sky. Peace profound, passion supreme, — *Nirvana.*

I close my eyes and wander back in memory to the land about Palestine, and recall a deadly wilderness where a Jesus wrestled

with himself for forty days. Through this metamorphic jungle of heterogeneity was he forced to struggle ere he wrested the Scepter from a phantom Moses and declared himself the King of the Jews. And this wilderness in which he plunged was the maze of thought. To teach poise he must first himself be poised. An acrobat must needs acquire the power of balance ere he can impart the art. The Jews were sick unto death; a Master, alone, can raise the dead. When a Jesus emerges from the wilderness, he comes armed with a sword, and protected by an olive branch.

The King of the Jews had found the Nirvana. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And by *I* he meant the I Am which is in each individual forever and forever.

His gospel this: "Pivot upon self and you become the center of the universe. 'I and my Father are one.' The wheel of the universal whirls around me, and I, the hub, experience from all points; and each experience adjusts to every other as spoke ad-

justs to spoke. I am, to myself, the center, you the object. You to yourself are the center, I am the object." Jesus of Nazareth taught life — life — life.

Away with your paradox, it has gone; in the light of Nirvana there is no paradox. Away with the soap-bubble of experience, in the blaze of Nirvana man goes to the depths. Away with the froth of feeling, in the thrill of Nirvana man suffers with the pain of passion. Once tasting the wine of Elysium, he drinks to the very dregs, and catching the zephyr-blown wreath of the Immortal, crowns himself with the bay. Life! Life! Life! I find that the word "Nirvana" strictly implies "to blow out." It is well. A candle sends its puny splutter of flame into my eyes; I extinguish it, but where is fire? Electricity flashes when its current is interrupted, light is born from friction, and friction is eternal. I jostle against my neighbor, here, there: lo, fire! The potential flame is in me; fire, the illusion, the delusion, the flashing symbol of the real, flames up and is blown out. Nir-

vana gleams like the star of Bethlehem and disappears. Nay! the gleaming only; the law of the flame is as eternal as am I. *It is I.*

Alas, we sleep till some Alcyone of a Master, some fiery, flashing center of Active Being, heats us into quickness, and we open our eyes upon a Jesus, who bids us bask in the sunlight of himself, till the smoldering fires at our own altars burst into glow. Till then, like sluggish snakes, we selfishly crawl at the feet of others, drinking, drinking, drinking, at the fount of their impassioned lives.

XII

HELLENIC THOUGHT

Zeno of Elea, about 500 B.C., was called the inventor of dialectic, or argument indulged in for the sake of truth rather than conquest. Whatever his motive might have been, Zeno loved the Sphinx, and sought to prove the One by the extinction of the many, raising great difficulties for the Greek mind, which required three quarters of a century to overcome them. In fact he staggered and paralyzed the thinkers of his age, as his eight surviving paradoxes stagger us to a certain extent even to-day. It was evident that these puzzles must be surmounted before more weighty problems of being could be attacked.

Parmenides' assertion that "The Ent is, and the non-ent is not," was simply to show

that the non-ent is ever changing, or becoming, therefore, not fixed and changeless. But Zeno went farther when saying, "The Ent is, and the non-ent is not," and strove to ignore the non-ent altogether, finding nothing but the One, and proving to his own satisfaction that the many is an illusion. This was sufficient to stultify the Greek mind, for if the many are not, why philosophy, why religion, why thought?

Plato saw clearly that Zeno must be surmounted, or Greece from a philosophical standpoint would die.

Zeno said in the paradox of prediction: "If existences are many, they must be both like and unlike; unlike inasmuch as they are not one and the same, and like inasmuch as they agree in not being one and the same. But this is impossible, for unlike things cannot be like; therefore existences are not many."

On this platform stood Zeno; and Plato, referring to this Zenonian difficulty, suggested that as likeness and unlikeness, greatness and

smallness, are but relativities, the first paradox ceases to be. In other words, Plato was evidently trying to say, that things may be alike in some respects while not in others, the relationship alone determining this. To put it in another light, he might have said that the principle of change or relationship is changeless; this very law unifying the many into One, and breaking up the One into the many.

Plato, then, when he came on the battle-ground of Greek thought, found the paradoxes of Zeno speeding towards him like so many arrows, that seeming to move moved not at all. Nor was Zeno a sophist in the general understanding of the term. The word "sophist" implies wisdom; and Zeno, though one-eyed intellectually, was nevertheless subtle, aye wise. He was after truth and found the One. A sublime monist, to him plurality faded into nothingness, and Unity extinguished the many as our sun puts out the stars.

From the point of generalization Zeno was

right. In the One there is no time nor space, no high nor low, no heterogeneity, motion nor possibility of adding to or taking from. Zeno recognized this mystery to be absolute, final, complete; and failed to see that absoluteness means naught without its antithesis, relativity; that spacelessness is unthinkable save through space; that eternity is nothing but for time; that the homogeneous necessitates the heterogeneous; that unification were impossible save through things to be unified; and that number is the corollary of the Celestial Unit. All this Zeno missed in his contemplation of the One.

Before Zeno, by perhaps half a century, Pythagoras had spoken. Pythagoras, who is said to have received his great doctrine from a priestess of Delphi, emphatically declared that Unity is in opposition to duality, and that the limited and unlimited cause *things*, and things necessitate number. But Zeno had studied with Parmenides and came forth to ascend a cold peak of generalization, where things were lost to view in *Thing*,

which, by the very nature of his position, must itself fade into unconsciousness later on. Zeno, then, by discovering but half of being, lost all, and practically paralyzed Greek thought for well-nigh a century.

The Greeks had a horror of the illimitable, and sought with avidity finite minutiæ in all its exquisiteness of detail. Pythagoras lay upon the breast of Hellas as her very own, and was honored on Olympus for his thigh of gold and his powers that rivaled those of the gods. But Zeno, with his paradoxical javelin barbed with little stinging mysteries, transfixed the *many* of Pythagoras till it seemed to the stunned brain of the Greek homogeneous and everlastingly One. Who, then, was destined to surmount this difficulty — who subtler than Zeno might dare attack the Hellenic Sphinx and force it to explain itself? When the Socratic Plato raised his clear eyes to the star-sown blue of Attica, or walked along the streets of Athens, the Greek blood bounded and the Greek heart took on new lease of life.

There comes a time in every great nation when the opposing schools of thought meet in an erratic third element, that by some mystery of providence appears on the scene to unify the two. The battle had been over the many and the One. With a quick eye one may glance back before Plato's time to theory after theory propounded by the great minds of Greece, and differing not so much one from another as the superficial student might imagine. Whether the schools were called Materialistic or Eleatic, the idea was about the same, and in many ways equal if not ahead of the nineteenth century thought.

The materialistic Anaximenes believed that all things were in gaseous condition, eternally in motion at different degrees of density; heat, which expands, and cold, which contracts, giving rise to all phenomena.

Anaximander claimed that there is ultimately an unlimited mass subject to neither age nor dissolution; and out of this unending generalization come form and things, which, reaching their climax as specializa-

tions, return again to the indestructible whole. This theory seems true to the rhythmic law of science, as it is understood by the materialistic thought of to-day.

The Eleatic Zenophanes, supposed founder of a certain Monistic School, claimed one God — all sight, all mind, all ear, motionless. And this from the point of Unity must be true, for motion necessitates the heterogeneous.

Then came the massive Heraclitus with his wonderful and seemingly Oriental paradox: "Everything is, and is not," sounding to our modern ears like the voice of Laotsze. Heraclitus strove to get rid of the vexed problem of the One and the many, by claiming that everything is "becoming"; that is, while everything is, the relationship of things is continually changing; therefore in a sense everything is not, as things re-relating seem to some extent to be different things.

Later Empedocles announced that there were two forces, love and hate, attraction

and repulsion. Nothing according to him ever was or ever will be; nothing comes in or goes out of being; the only change manifest is in the alteration of the position of changeless things. In a sense Empedocles was the forerunner of the modern schools of Evolution.

We glance over the list of these early Greek thinkers, to recall to the modern mind the fact that thought is one and the same always; and with the amount of data then acquired was as weighty in the sunshiny land of the Ægean as it is in the fog-drenched British Isles to-day.

As England rounded a climax in Spencer, Tyndall, and Huxley, so Hellas touched the Olympus of thought when Democritus, Socrates, and Plato stole fire from heaven and burned the altars of the Greeks with the light of their very eyes; all save Democritus, who, alas, went into absolute darkness, that he might no longer be disturbed in his thinking by distracting objectivities. Democritus propounded the Cosmic theory, the one of all ancient materialistic hypotheses most

considered by modern thinkers. Democritus was an extreme skeptic, believing that the soul perishes with the body. He is supposed to have said, "There is nothing true, and if there is, we do not know it; we know nothing, not even if there is anything to know." In spite of this assertion of an intellectual giant, he was led to posit an ultimate atom in which all things, including spirit, are; these atoms, being ever in motion, bring forth worlds and fire which is soul and nothing else. Give the modern Democritus "dust and energy," and you have atomic motion, correlating to the ancient theory of this early master of the Atomistic School, living about 460 B.C.

During this age lived Protagoras, the first of the Sophists who asserted that there is no such thing as objective truth; and that man might be called his own standard. "What is that it is, and what is not that it is not," he said. Protagoras was apparently an inductive reasoner, making culture his aim and experience his master.

Prodicus, Protagoras' contemporary, built ethics upon this Sophistic School, adding inference and good morals to experience as a natural corollary. Thus hurriedly we glance over the Greek mountain peaks of thought, which like the Mysian Olympus loom in a chain of glittering crags that dazzle and astound us. High above them tower the massive scarred face of Socrates and the beautiful dome of Plato, destined by the Fates to overshadow the others, and to brood over all earth while time lasts.

As Egyptian subtleties had stolen like an undulating serpent upon Hellenic shores, so had the Greek insinuated himself into the Syrian mysteries, and colored a certain secret sect of enthusiasts who lived and throve on the very threshold of the Jew.

I write of the Essenes, one of the three sects of the Jews who came in some unknown way under the influence of Greek thought. Whether this rose from Jewish touch with Greek philosophy or from some close Pythagorean contact, it is hard to discover. The

Essenes lived much as did the Neopythagoreans, though it would seem rather soon (it being but two hundred years before Christ) for the Pythagorean tree to have spread its roots so far. Nevertheless they had much of the Greek idea and innumerable Greek myths. Upon them after death was to blow the Elysian west wind, as upon the beatified Greek. They mixed Pythagorean asceticism with Oriental mysticism, and surely, somehow, had fallen under the spell that is magical even to this day.

The Essenes, though Jews, had caught glimpses of that phantom serpent which coils and uncoils in India, Egypt, Greece, and Syria, — that mystery that stretches itself in the sun, and throws off its magic glow and shimmer to glide away at an unlooked-for moment into the dark abyss of the unknown.

It is said that the Syrian Jew called Jesus belonged to this mystical sect of the Essenes. Whether this were so or not he might have consciously or unconsciously expounded

much of the Neopythagorean doctrine, either from the fact that most mystic thinkers reach the same or similar conclusions, or because having been into the depth of the Egyptian mind, he had also been into that of the Greek.

XIII

ON OLYMPUS

At the Alexandrian School of Philosophy were originally a few Jews that steadily grew in number till about the time of the Christian era, when they formed a powerful addition to the Egyptian populace. This threw Greek thought and Jewish philosophic speculation together, and the Hellenic influence became paramount. The Platonic writings especially impressed the Jews, and they strove constantly to reconcile and moderate their own manner of thinking to conform to Greek ideas. They finally settled upon a doctrine containing Jewish theosophical and Oriental conceptions based on the works of the early Greek scholars. This far-reaching movement, combining philosophy with inspiration, is called the Neoplatonic. The

Christian dogma, introduced as a leaven into this new loaf, had to be reconciled or absorbed, and gave rise to the Gnostics, who colored the writings of the early fathers of the church.

In Philo, the flower of Jewish philosophy, we discover metaphysic and theosophy strangely fused. Oriental mysticism and Greek metaphysic are married by Philo at the altar of the Egyptian Alexandrian school, and come down to us as a Jew's synthesis.

Plato, it would seem, had developed, in his long and marvelous life, a jumble of logic, ethics, physics, psychology, and metaphysic, half idealistic, which Aristotle separated and classified. Through Plato's network of philosophy one may easily discover a central idea that runs like a golden thread hither and thither in the varied pattern. To find this thread is to discover the identical tie which bound it to previous philosophies as well as to that which came after.

It is said of Plato: "All philosophic truth is Plato rightly divined. All philosophic

error is Plato misunderstood." So possibly might it be said of Jesus born of Neoplatonism and Neopythagoreanism.

But let us go back to Plato's time, and search out the grove of Academus where this broad-shouldered athlete walked and talked; who before his acquaintance with Socrates had written poetry and indulged in dreams; let us discover him if possible and sit at his feet awhile for instruction, purely Greek, purely Athenian. He adopts the method of Socrates, and marshals his dramatic personæ about him to puzzle them with questions, that he may possibly learn from other men's experiences and conceptions something of himself and therefore something of truth. He searches as did the Buddhist for the Nirvana of specialization — the balance-point amid innumerable experiences. Plato used the inductive method, — sought for data, and drew conclusions independently of previous notions or former masters. He proceeded in philosophy as though he were the first and only interlocutor, and had fallen among men

from some high place of nonexperience, where naught was known and all must be discovered. He manifested, like Socrates, the profoundest curiosity regarding man's innermost conceptions, and wrote down his deductions on a clean slate where no man had written before. He looked into common things as though they were uncommon, and went to the taproots of subjects that people in general never dreamed of discussing.

When Plato and Socrates arrived on the scene of Greek action, one said, "All is motion;" another, "All is rest;" while others cried above them, "The absolute is unattainable; the relative alone is real;" but this jarred no whit on Socrates and but little on Plato.

The Socratic paradox, which we can well imagine Plato propounding as he walked back and forth in the sacred grove, might have been thus: "Can virtue be taught? Yes, and no; in the highest sense there is no virtue." And the startled disciple, more

puzzled than ever, would force the master on to clear his intellectual heaven.

Plato tackles the law of contraries by five categories — rest, motion, being, sameness, difference. According to Plato every negative implies a positive, and true negation is correlative to an affirmation.

Here we desire to digress a little to speak of this Law of Opposites again. It is sometimes called the Identity of Contraries, and is open to criticism because so expressed. We wish to say simply this, that contraries can never be identical because they are contrary; they can, however, be inseparable, the one pole being impossible without the other. A thinker might, perhaps, say of the Identity of Contraries that an entity or thing has polarity; but really it is a poor term, and much of the quibbling about such men as Hegel, who strenuously argues for the Identity of Contraries, would be set aside, were there more thought exerted in the use of terms.

We return to ancient Athens and discover that Plato has perpetuated Socrates in a

series of immortal dialogues, that express not only these two masters but the highest Athenian life and thought. The strange peers, Socrates and Plato, differed from most of the Greek teachers in taking no fee for their teachings, being above selling heaven's fire to warm half-frozen humanity. Plato sought pure Reason or the Reason of the reasons, traveling from objectivity to the idea back of it, ever following this same idea to its unknown source, where at its point of vanishing he discovered a second as mysterious and divine.

Philo of Jewish fame has been accused of seeking to graft a Moses on the body of Plato, or *vice versa*, as one would graft a peach upon a plum. Plato taught man to see the invisible, and Philo did the same; hence the accusation may not be farfetched after all.

Hellenic influence had been powerful on Judaism, and was destined to come down ponderously on Christianity; in fact, one might better say Christianity was born of it,

muscle, sinew, bone, and heart. The question that had been racking Greece for centuries was the One or the many — many or One. Plato came forth with dualistic monism, making One essential to many — many to One. He untwisted the paradox of Zeno and throttled the Greek Sphinx.

By the side of this pure school in Alexandria there grew up a second, and the heathen and the Christian began their ceaseless battle for supremacy. The Christian and heathen Alexandrian schools start from a common premise, namely: Many, — changeable, illusive; and One, — changeless, permanent. It would seem that the weakness of both the Christian and Neoplatonic schools lay in their assuming a personality at both poles of being, — the One and many. The very law of opposition implying, on the contrary, that personality must lie in the phenomenal many, and not in the noumenal One. The phenomenal pole implies person, things, time, space, change; the noumenal the opposite of all this, knowing naught of person, time, or

space — being the reverse, and nothing other than eternal law. But these two schools quarreled over the one absolute person and the many persons — the God and the gods; though we believe the Greek masters rose above this, and comprehended the final opposition which lies between law and its expression in things, or things and their expression in Law, — the two being coeternal and inseparable.

The Neoplatonic school, though possessed of but little vitality as compared with the pure Platonic, nevertheless fathered a few thinkers and some martyrs. Proclus, who had come in touch with the fiery magnetism of Hypatia, kept the golden chain of Platonic philosophy intact. It seems the fate of one who dares to undertake the task of causing the eyes of creeds and philosophies to look squarely at each other, either to be burned at the stake, or slaughtered in a more insidious manner by the tongues of his adversaries. Hypatia was hacked with clam shells and dragged in the mire, — she, a re-

nowned, refined scholar of Athens, aye, more, a masterly thinker who held strong men captive till fired by the selfsame zeal which consumed her. Christianity has disgraced itself many times, but of all vile acts this would seem the vilest that history has yet recorded.

But did Platonic philosophy die with Neoplatonism? Not at all. There seemed to be periodic revivals, and Plato's famous dialogues are studied religiously even to this day. You will find, if you look deeply, that the masters who strike the ultimate dualistic-monistic premise cannot die. Previous to Plato in Greek thought there had been many giants, Pythagoras' platform being a sort of structure which the sophist Zeno strove to overthrow, but upon which in spite of him Plato grew.

But what of Christianity in the Neoplatonic age, — whence had it come, and why? Philo knew Plato and the old Alexandrian school; the Jew was colored with Greek dye — heavy, somber. Jewish symbolism had

long gleamed in Hellenic light. The solemn and pontifical step of the Hebrew had quickened at the sound of the Greek tongue. And Jesus, a Jew, had surely realized the Alexandrian school through proxy if not otherwise, and having seized upon its vital ideas at its climax, had welded it to Jewish superstition.

The Greek was a reasoner; more, he was subtle and attacked the very outpost of the reasons; he demanded the Absolute, — the Reason. The Jew had been a voluptuous materialist, worshiping a very small anthropomorphic God — a pygmy of his own brain. Jesus, either through Greece or his own mastership, discovered the verity which Hellas had laid bare, and draping it in Jewish habiliments, and introducing it at a Jewish temple, did what had been done many times before and has been many times since, namely: brought a foreigner to the table and bade it sup with his very own.

As Socrates' great idea was to discover the meaning of the many, and the essential truth that lay at the base of the heterogeneous, so

Christ mingled with the masses, and found that in the very heart of humanity he might discover the key to final felicity. Like Socrates, Jesus consorted with the riffraff and the rabble, and talked to promiscuous crowds; he neither scorned the feast nor the wedding, and while in the world was yet not of it. Socrates rose superior to the opinions of others, save as they bore upon the truth for which he searched. Christ was in a sense an innovation upon all previous times and peoples These men sought in objectivity and experience pure truth for its own sake, and in the seeking surmounted the Zenonian sphinx, and discovered the polarity which means the many and implies the One.

Greek thought was Syriac thought; and perhaps Roman thought as well. Greek thought was Jewish thought; for all the Mediterranean sweep had thrilled to Greece, that in its day had touched Egypt mind to mind.

As the men of Attica were Athenians, so the men of the eastern Mediterranean coast

line were in a sense Greek. The splendor of the Hellenic mind, culminating in the Socratic Plato, and appearing in its anticlimax of Neoplatonism, has remained undimmed through the centuries; nor can those steady suns of the Orient that glitter over Persia and Himalaya put out the flash and glory of the Hellenic stars.

XIV

PAUL

THERE are many Pauls, yet there seems to be but one. A figure standing out so prominently as does his in history monopolizes an otherwise common name, giving it a high and lonely place. Paul may not have been an essentially great man, but he fits so uniquely into events at a critical time in the history of Christianity that in studying its philosophy he can never be escaped or ignored. To behold him where in one sense he appears smallest and in another largest, is to go to ancient Hellas and stand upon Mars Hill while he speaks to the men of Athens.

The scholars had come out to listen to a new cult, and stood about sarcastically view-

ing its small champion, mentally amused at his jumble of mysticism and logic. His visit to Athens was both a failure and a triumph, though many Christian historians describe it as the latter, when doctoring facts with a dose of imagination.

The Greeks were immeasurably ahead of Paul in logic, but he transcended them in faith and conviction. He had passed through a great mystic experience, and his manner of thinking had been changed. First a cruel persecutor, afterward a somewhat contradictory partisan, his position was one of antinomy. He had a sprinkling of Alexandrian Philosophy, but was emphatically a Jew. He had seized subtly upon dualism, but had twins in hand too big for him to hold. His real strength lay in his transcendentalism, where faith, a law in itself, overcomes the Mosaic laws and is universal, making all one in the body of Christ.

Paul made a mistake in separating Mosaic laws from intrinsic laws, teaching them as extraneous to things. He failed in his defi-

nition of faith, but was great in the practice of that which he could not logically define. He was contradictory in positing for God and man free will, at the same time declaring God's absoluteness. "Some men," he said, "are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; some are vessels of mercy prepared unto glory"; which is pure fatalism or autocracy. Again, "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Yet in the face of this arbitrary dictum he declares humanity responsible for its acts. He says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Paul had all the particularisms of the Jew, and but little of the universalism of the Greek Alexandrian school. The Jews believed that there was a time for miracles, an age for prophets, but at this narrow idea the broad Greek scoffed, saying: "Law is law, it is eternal. If prophets are once existent, they are possible under like conditions always. If miracles can take place in one age, so can they, all things being equal, in another."

Imagine this narrow but powerful Paul defying the condensed logic of Athens and the expressed mind of Alexandria on the Hill of Mars. He not only faced the defiant, just eye of philosophy, but the menacing scowl of failure also. Defeat was as surely upon him as are cause and effect one; but there he stood on the Areopagus and challenged the men of Athens. This was the city of the Acropolis where rose the Parthenon, and that incomparable pentelic marble building, the propylæa, forming the vestibule to the fivefold gates. Everywhere were statues to Minerva, — symbols well set of the completed logic of Attica and the powerful thought of Greece. But Paul, the Jew, by his very audacity, transcended all, even failure itself; for this is what he said: "Ye men of Athens! Everything which I behold bears witness to your carefulness in religion; for as I passed by I beheld your sacred objects. I found an altar with this inscription, 'To the Unknown God.' Whom therefore ye worship, though ye know It not,

Him declare I unto you." Here Paul unconsciously eclipsed himself, and emphasized a truth that rings yet with the reverberation of a mallet struck on gold. Paul subtly expected to rivet upon Athens the new-born dogmatism of Pauline theology; instead he fastened upon the world the synthetic maxim of a Spencer. He unconsciously thundered into the very ears of Athens: "You — you are right! This Unknown God towers over dogma and sectarianism. It is neither Platonic nor Neoplatonic. It was born neither in Alexandria, Athens, nor Rome. It is not Christian or Pagan, Oriental or Occidental. It is universal truth." But Paul was ignorant of his own master stroke. He had temporarily subsided, and another greater than himself, an oracle, delphic in its certainty of speech, had moved him to give utterance to this deathless sentence that rings on yet from the Hill of Mars.

Out of the Alexandrian school came Platonism, and from Platonism, Neoplatonism, and from Neoplatonism, probably Christian-

ity; or rather, we might say, from a wedding of Neoplatonism and Judaism. Athens, then, saw but herself in new halo under guise of Christianity, of Plato redressed in Jewish habiliments, — Philo bedecking the philosopher in the magnificent paraphernalia of the Jewish priest. And Athens beheld, too, her own face in the mirror of Jesus' eyes, and heard her own precepts in the echo of his voice.

Paul from over zeal attempted to dam with theology the limpid fountain of truth; yet in spite of him the crystal waters burst their bounds, and spreading over far stretches of country caused flowers to grow wild and rank. Paul might have preached at length on the Areopagus, he might have told of his conversion on the way to Damascus, receiving but sneers. He might have expounded the doctrine of original sin, of salvation through Christ, and the resurrection of the dead, to be shouted at in derision by the amused and disgusted crowd. But the masterly, unanswerable stand which he took be-

fore the Athenians when he declared the Unknown God, transfixed them as though barbed javelins had pierced their hearts. They were philosophers, wisdom lovers, thinkers. Did not the flash of the helmet plumes of Minerva glitter far, even over the Ægean Sea? Had they not a statue to wingless Victory? Was not the Parthenon the wrangling place of the gods? And this little Jew on the Areopagus stunned them with their own axiom, and crystallized philosophy into the "Rock of Ages." He triumphed, — he failed. What cared these men of Athens for his theology, those particularisms of the race-Jew? He had begun his speech with his peroration, and the exordium which ridiculously came afterward was "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal in their ears."

Yet there is one Paul, who in spite of his coffin-lid of theology, grasped by some subtlety the innermost meaning of the religious situation at the beginning of the Christian era, and so bound and wove Judaism, Pla-

tonism, and Christianity into a resplendent wreath, which the pale and earnest Minerva of the twentieth century wears upon her brow.

XV

THE CARTESIAN SCHOOL

At last we have reached the spirit of the modern age, which may perhaps be the spirit of all ages reëmbodied. Descartes began his search for truth by throwing away prejudice, ancestral notions, man-made dogmas, and so-called inspiration. In fact he stripped himself to pure ego, which, being the last degree of nakedness, is shorn of adornments of fancy and nearly everything accruing from the senses; and finding himself a thinking quality after all, he said, "*Cogito ergo sum.*" He had arrived at the point where the objective is minimum and the subjective maximum, yet found the two inseparables still together. To think, there must be something *not* ego upon which to exercise the judging power; therefore exist-

ence means *two* — myself and something else; and the finality is conscious thought, which implies ego and non-ego.

The consciousness of self, according to Descartes, is the beginning of knowledge. Can self get ahead of or beyond self? This proposition is impossible on its face, and Descartes stops at the impossible. The principle that underlies Descartes' philosophy is, that one can only be conscious of his finiteness through a preconsciousness of infinity; for how can we know that we are imperfect if we have not an inner consciousness of the perfect? According to Descartes we do not learn of the perfect through the imperfect, but subconsciously of the imperfect through first realizing the possibility of perfection, absoluteness, or God. As Kant held, we do not know of space through knowing spaces, but *vice versa*.

Had Descartes gone farther, he would have found God and his ego one (as Jesus asserted when he said, "I and my Father are one"); for the consciousness of God can

never precede the self-evident principle which lies in the self itself. Here Descartes is somewhat weak, and is a little afraid of his own greatness. He really had in grasp the polarized monism of all leaders of thought, but was frightened at the giant he held. Had he dared, he would have said, God-consciousness is self-consciousness, the first and unanswerable principle of being, opposed to matter, its other pole, which is again itself in expression, therefore inseparable from it, yet never it. This would seem to be what Descartes just escaped saying. He came so close to this premise that he practically and honestly could posit no other. Consciously he seemed to himself a dualist; in reality, however, he was a monist, and found the essential unity in spite of himself.

Descartes starts out grandly; he conceives of mind and matter as absolute opposites, denying for one what he posits for the other, and *vice versa;* then he falls absurdly by positing completeness of the attributes of

mind and incompleteness of the attributes of matter; thereby losing the balance and, in fact, the God. If the positive pole is true to itself, the negative is also true. There is either no illusion in the *finality* of things anywhere, or it is all illusion. The illusion and imperfection which Descartes found in matter resulted in his shortsightedness and failure to discern unity.

Out of the cloister stepped Malebranche to clear up the premise of Descartes, making a rent in the veil of fog, but only a rent — still it hung thick, and the modern philosophic eyelash drips with the mist of it yet. Malebranche holds with Descartes that we abstract our finite from the infinite bit by bit — that the conception of One precedes the conception of the many. He detects the flaw in Descartes' theory who conceived of the idea of the infinite and the being of the same as *two*, for he makes of his infinite both a reality and an idea. Opposition between mind and matter is understood by Malebranche as absolute; but here he fails also,

making God distinct from the material existences outside of him, in fact utterly independent of them. He escapes Pantheism, where he should perhaps be, denying that individual minds are the expressed moods of one great mind; his religion keeping him from this position, and making him inconsistent with his premise. To matter, however, he willingly accords this universalism, thus failing to establish the proper polarity, and covering himself with inconsistency. In trying to reconcile his philosophy with his dogmatic theology, he was so absurdly lame that any discussion of the subject would be a waste of time. As to his philosophy, a dualism that excludes one pole of itself is no dualism at all, but a contradiction. If the finite is illusion, then there is no finite and infinity is all, or rather there is no infinity; if, on the contrary, the finite is a reality, but an abstraction from infinity, again the infinite ceases to be; for infinity must contain by its very nature finiteness. There is no such thing as counting the finites

that make infinity. Therefore while Malebranche tore many leaves from the laurel wreath of philosophy, the completed crown was never his.

Spinoza, who followed Malebranche in the evolution of Cartesianism, had cut loose from Judaism and stood aloof in a sense from former philosophies. He was entirely free from prejudice and superstition, relying on the power of thought alone for the solution of the mystery he sought to solve. Spinoza was mathematical in his method, laying down many definitions, axioms, and postulates. In the realm of the emotions Spinoza believed that we wander in the dark as to truth's finality; in the realm of the intellect, however, we are in the air of mathematics where truth is cut into icicles which no sun of feeling is hot enough to melt. Here things are fixed and final that form the only basis from which to reckon and investigate. On this high peak of splendor those that love or hate, demand or repudiate, are as naught. My little opinions for or against

this, that, or the other, are negated. Here naked I meet nude Truth — cold, unfeeling, absolute.

Spinoza rose far above his companions in Cartesianism when, instead of belittling matter, he made it coequal with mind. While insisting on the everlasting opposition of the two, he yet united them in ultimate unity, explaining the antonym of the special and the general as unity manifesting in eternal phenomena; which is not the terrible thing called matter at all, but only shifting manifestations of a polarized unit. Here Spinoza reached the sublime height of greatness, yet scarcely so far up on the pinnacle of thought as is the subtle Buddhist, who discerns from his splendid vantage point of generalization that even particulars are not delusions, but essential, vital verities. Spinoza strove to find this solution by claiming that the part in its essence is the whole, and *vice versa*, and would have been firm-rooted here had he not still prated of illusion; as though there

were in a sweeping generalization of philosophy any place for the word at all. Spinoza came close to the finality of thinking, however, though he failed when he strove to divorce the material negation from affirmation, thus contradicting his own position of the eternal opposition of matter and mind. Spinoza was weak in making finiteness *not* God, yet at the same time ever inseparable from him; finiteness being but a *modal* unity and nothing other.

It is impossible not to see the inconsistency in Spinoza's thought, when we behold his two leading premises. One that matter and mind are coequal, that there is no finite without the infinite, and *vice versa;* and the other, that the finite being an abstraction through the mind's power of number, must be got rid of as illusory. Yet, in spite of these irreconcilable positions, Spinoza crowns Cartesianism and stands at the head of a mighty school of thought.

Under their lame expositions and painful contradictions, these three — Descartes,

Malebranche, and Spinoza — form a daring triplet of pioneers in modern thought, who faced the solid phalanx of dogmatic churches, shaking in Europe's priest-scarred face the flaming torch of truth that had been practically hid from the human glance for generations.

Spinoza was a Portuguese Jew, simple, retiring, and mightily afraid of notoriety or fame. He was considered the devil by his awe-struck contemporaries, and is looked upon now by many as a saint. He neither taught philosophy for money nor honor, but was said to be as cheap and accessible as Satan himself. His books were published after his death, and the moderns are just beginning to popularize them. He is so startlingly close to what to-day's science pronounces true that he has grown to a giant's stature in the world's estimation within the last decade. Had he sprung into notice in the twentieth century, it would be less of a miracle, but for a Portuguese and a Jew to evolve such thought in the seventeenth

century, in the very corridors of the Jewish temple, and under the shadows of the orthodox Christian steeple, is surprising if nothing more.

The Neoplatonic column needed its capping stone. This column had been cut in Egypt, to be finished in Greece, and the Jewish race crowned it with Spinoza, who completed its greatness and perpetuated its fame.

XVI

THE GERMAN RATIONALISTS AND MYSTICS

A MYSTIC is often a rationalist, and a rationalist a mystic; which emphatically illustrates the Law of Contraries and the meeting of extremes.

In making a dive into the sea of German thought, both transcendental and rational, we have but one object. Far be it from us to wade through the shallow shoals of speculation to sink now and then, heads under, in the treacherous depths of metaphysic. We care no whit just here for dialectic wrangling about the absolute and relative or the infinite and finite. The mental battle ground of old Germany is strewn thick with the dead who perished by the sword thrusts of a Kant or a Hegel. No,

the whole purpose of this work is to find the identical something that Jesus of Nazareth called a pearl of great price, and which the Twentieth Century Christ must still handle.

If, then, we call up the ghosts of the Immortals from the shadowy realms of German thought, we shall ask them one after another a single question, ignoring the splendors of their dialectic and the massiveness of their logic. Through the jungle of philosophy we seek the practical, the applied; that something which amounts to a formula in living, or in other words a receipt for ethics.

The absolute, even under Kant's definition, is admitted to be transcendental and beyond the grasp of thought; in its essence incomprehensible and seemingly contradictory. How, then, in the absolute shall we find a possibility of practical application; how from the unknowable extract a code of ethics?

Think a moment! Is not Law, or a law, absolute, incomprehensible, reliable? Has it any tendency to change or modification?

Yet through these same laws or law do we not gain practical results, and deduce ethical codes? Does the fact that reason has never yet fathomed the innermost meaning of Law make it any the less possible of application? So, then, though the Germans wrangle about our power of understanding absoluteness or that much-abused word, "absolute," we take no issue with them on this score, but simply query if the incomprehensible may not, in spite of all this, be practically applied; and though never grasped by reason, at least utilized in action.

What, then, shall we ask the great of Germany as we summon them one by one? Simply this: Have you discovered the Law which the Syrian Jew hundreds of years ago strove to make practical? Do you, as metaphysicians, rationalists, and mystics, admit that Law, and what is it? Have you been forced by the nature of reason back to the same conclusion as that of the Chinese sages, the Hindu Buddhas, the Greek Platonists, the Syrian Jew? Do the thinkers of

the seventeenth century find themselves astride a mysterious Law which they may harness and drive like a tamed steed, but in no way finally comprehend? Is it a principle that in its broadest aspect might be called the centripetal and centrifugal force; from a narrower view is it rhythm, or action and reaction; from a shortsighted aspect, antithesis — the law of opposition or the wrongly termed Identity of Contraries? We ask you not, O shades of Saxony, whether you taught the open secret of this principle as a universal solvent of life's woes, but did you — *did you* stumble upon this absolute Law in the maze of deductive logic where you wandered, and have you so stated to the world?

Listen! A voice from Leipsic echoes along the years, and we hear Leibnitz who, seizing upon the truisms in Cartesianism, claims that the omnipotent God of Descartes and the divine substance of Spinoza were better defined as individual centers of *force,* and that these monads are *percipient,* self-

acting beings. Descartes stood for the conservation of momentum, and Leibnitz for the conservation of energy; and both were correct. But aside from his profound exposition of these units of force, we hear him say: There is dualism in unity. The first or highest truth is based on the law of identity or contradiction. One of these truths naturally flowers out of the other; the law of contradiction or identity being a necessity of rhythmic expression in that which we call cause and effect.

Hark again! From Berlin comes the undying echo of Fichte's voice: The ego is *real*, for itself so posits; but it also has the power to op-posit or contro-posit; the law of opposition being in ego itself — that which op-posits being negative to its positive self. In other words the law of polarity is in ego; the world as we comprehend it being in consciousness opposed to pure ego. In the primary synthesis, then, we find the opposites or contraries which interact and are mutually essential to each other. This is Fichte.

But listen to Schopenhauer: Object and subject are not two but one perpetually becoming polarized; in fact object is the other end of the subject, and *vice versa*. When a man says, "I know," he implies by the saying that there is something to know; and this implication is made through the law of antithesis which necessitates subject and object. In other words, ego and not-ego are a unity manifesting in polarity forever and forever.

We hear more from Schopenhauer in his sublime exposition on the Will, which lies outside of "occasional cause," but of that at present we have nothing to say. That he emphasized the Law of Antithesis is sufficient for our purpose, and we pass on.

Loud above the voices of them all rings that of Immanuel Kant. He says: "Now a negative cannot be cogitated as determined without cogitating at the same time the opposite affirmation. The man born blind has not the least notion of darkness, because he has none of light; the vagabond knows

nothing of poverty, because he has never known what it is to be in comfort; the ignorant man has no conception of his ignorance, because he has no conception of knowledge. All conceptions of negatives are accordingly derived or deduced conceptions; and realities contain the data and, so to speak, the material of transcendental *con*tent of the possibility and complete determination of all things."

And Hegel takes up the strain: "Every verity is the unification of two elements in themselves opposed, not only as in great and little, but are even contradictory as in same and different." Thus the formula of Fichte in regard to thesis, antithesis, and synthesis was turned by Hegel into a perpetual principle of thought itself.

From these great rationalists or idealists, whichever you may choose to call them, let us turn a moment to Johannes Eckhart, the first famous speculative mystic, who was born in Saxony in the thirteenth century. He finds his dualistic unity in essence, other-

wise godhead or potentiality, and its opposed expression in nature. His polarities, therefore, he termed "God and Nature," which means after all but absolute and relative, noumenon and phenomenon.

Then came Jacob Boehme, who seemed to see Isis without her veil — awful, beautiful. He beheld contrasts: hardness, softness; severity, mildness; the sweet, the bitter; love, hate; heaven, hell. The "wrath side of God" was the Rembrandt view of Isis' face, and the love side was where the sunshine struck — but the soul of her was one.

After him echoes the voice of the Catholic Baader, who speaks of nature as the mere "otherness" of God.

But what of it all? Only this, that wherever you find thinkers (and they are not so plentiful on the face of the earth) you find also a recognition in philosophy, if not in practice, of the Law of Antithesis.

The German head is large, speculative, positive; it thinks *a priori* rather than *a posteriori*, if one may so speak. It descends

from its high premise of a known or hypothetical law to the specials and relatives with a sublime and serious dignity. The German wrangles much about the absolute and unconditioned, and lays great stress upon the abstractions and unthinkables. He loves dialectic and analytic, and argues himself into and out of theology with rhythmic regularity. He is masterly in deduction from the point of debate if not from the point of practice. All together he would seem to have reached the finality of thinking were it not that empirical, unsyllogistic methods had yet to be thrashed out by the practical English mind.

A new galaxy of thinkers was bound to follow in the great highway where long before them had stalked, with mighty strides, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, in order to make visible the antithesis even in thought, where induction coils on its other pole of deduction, like the snake about to strike.

Under the weeping skies of England there suddenly sprang like mushrooms a galaxy

of empirical reasoners, crudely called realists, scientists, materialists, whose system is so thorough, and foundation of fact so rock-like, that the clouds of transcendentalism look hazy and far off by contrast, though still floating in blue heaven as essential to earth as are her very granite ribs. And these brainy Englishmen, who have somewhat of brawn as well, bear the names of Wallace, Darwin, Romanes, Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer, standing opposed and yet united to the mystic rationalists of Germany as though the very antipodes must have its veritable illustration in these peerless human specimens.

Rhythm sings its own undying song on the great organ of the world; its mass chord of basic subtleties reverberating from the very caverns of the deep; its transcendental echoes falling sheer and wonderful from the arc above, peal on peal, strain on strain, of endless music rising, descending, floating on and on, as the masters emerge from and return again to nature's womb.

XVII

GAUTAMA AND HERBERT SPENCER

From Kant, with his categories, his irresistible relating of subject to object, his idea of unity in dualism; from Fichte, who forces the ego to limit itself that it may obtain the consciousness of the non-ego; from Schelling, who substituted for Fichte's law, "Ich ist Alles," that other, "Alles ist Ich;" from Hegel, who showed that absolute opposites could be and were united and reconciled, we turn to Herbert Spencer.

Aristotle laid down the Principle of Contradiction as the highest law of thought. Hegel kept steadily in view the "Begriff," the conception of self-activity, as the ultimate law. Spencer pivots himself upon his Unknowable, and reaching into the knowable with his long and tireless arm, gathers in

data, till out of his accumulated pile he confirms a law.

But who is this resurrected Sage that stands close at his elbow? Can it be the Gautama Buddha who walked and talked in the deer gardens of Benares, as did Plato in Academus? Extremes have met; the past and present touch in thought, the East and West embrace.

Ethics are bound up in experimental philosophy. To know a cult is to find a rule of action.

In presenting to you a parallel between the modern empiricism of Herbert Spencer and the ancient inductive method of Gautama, I most certainly preach ethics. In fact, it would seem that the question of right and wrong settles itself when proven by practice. The moral precepts of the Sage of India and the Savant of England are the correlates of their cults, and therefore self-settling.

It is well known by all students of Spencer that he arrives at his principle of action in social life by an accumulation of data,

reaching invincible law at last on the ladder of specialization.

He found out why people cannot lie, steal, murder, nor hate with impunity, and he needed no divine inspiration to discover this, other than that which burst upon him through the logic of facts.

Under the Bo tree Gautama wrestled with the law of cause and effect until he not only discerned that the one slept in the other's bosom in generalization, but that they followed each other in specialization as surely as day comes after night; hence he preached sowing and reaping in the little vehicle (Hinayana) and divine comprehension in the great vehicle (Mahayana).

The outcome, then, of synthetic philosophy and Mahayana Buddhism is a splendid system of ethics written on the Sinai of mind, and as stable as the Law of laws.

Western possibilities of investigation into the psychology of Buddhism lie in Oriental authority, which must be taken somewhat

at second hand. In truth, it is harder to get at the heart of Eastern teaching than at that of the Christian religion.

One thing is generally conceded, however, by Oriental and Occidental scholars, and that is, that upon experience and inference Gautama based his philosophy exactly in accordance with the modern inductive method. Herbert Spencer, who, considering his rather low estimate of ancient philosophies, must needs shrink from an unnecessary comparison, nevertheless, by this time knows that the law of rhythm was not discovered by him nor his contemporaries. In a footnote on page 214 of "First Principles" he says, "After having for some years supposed myself alone in the belief that all motion is rhythmical, I discovered that my friend Professor Tyndall also held this doctrine." To-day he has undoubtedly found out that in the Orient, even in old China as far back as the time of Confucius and Laotsze, this principle was fundamental in their systems of thought.

When Spencer wrote his "First Principles," Oriental philosophy was dubbed heathenism, and by most Western thinkers was not considered worthy of investigation. Out of his own logic then, which means nothing but his observation and conclusion, Spencer, backed by Tyndall and his brilliant contemporaries, presented to the world an old principle in new guise, proving by this that given two thinkers of like acumen and thought, separated by a term of two thousand years, they are likely to evolve the same idea.

Admitting that the law of periodicity, and the scientific method of investigating physics and psychics, were anciently understood, we are prepared for the interpretation of Buddhism made by a number of the best scholars that have come out of the East.

Once rend the splendor of myth and symbolism which envelops Gautama like a cloud, and what do we behold? Nothing other than an inductive and deductive system of which the *a priori* intuitions serve only to

emphasize the first premise of either the mystic or the physicist.

Spencer stands out naked in his freedom from mythical habiliments, a product of the nineteenth century. He is a clean-cut fact, having nothing but his Unknowable as a misty background for his revered picture. Gautama, on the contrary, is well-nigh lost behind a mysterious veil of occultism, a vague truth because less apparent, but one so potent in its hidden strength that to-day five hundred millions of human beings, in some way or other, are held by its spell. Unveil Gautama and present him to the world in his aspect of pure reason, push Spencer backward to the verge of his non-understandable first principle, change their names, and Prince Siddartha might well walk about in this age and generation in Spencer's shoes and do the work that Spencer did; while by the reverse process, the voice of the modern synthesist could have easily resounded in the deer gardens of Benares.

Individuality is said to be "the identity of particularity and universality." Spencer welded the homogeneous and the heterogeneous into an individual, beginning with the heterogeneous; thus, too, did Gautama. The great modern cults build up from particulars, sending forth their Wallace and Darwin to gather the fruits of experience in the form of data, and the great ancient but still lusty school of Oriental Buddhism fills to the brim the Three Baskets with inferential fruit won from experimental research.

It is somewhat displeasing to our latter day pride to find, as we get closer to the Orient and deeper into the mind of the past, that all that *is, has been,* in the way of discovery and thought — of course with a difference, but this much-boasted difference, after all, results only from a changed environment and the individuality which deals with it.

Mathematics flowered in Euclid and the conic sections. Democritus presented the atomic theory in as nearly good form, so

say modern physicists, as it is presented to-day. Plato anticipated Bacon in his inductive method. In fact, there is scarcely an idea in philosophy that ancient Greece had not conceived.

All the world knows that art and architecture bloomed far back in the age of Pericles; that law and government reached an approximate perfection in Rome; that by some mastery over engineering, the mighty pillars of Karnak were reared and the pyramids built; that the lost arts imply a subtlety and keenness of intellect as great as that of to-day; and that we have emerged out of the dungeons of medieval times to find ourselves under the same intellectual sun that flashed on the Aryan of India and the Sage of Greece hundreds of years before Jesus was born.

I would state again emphatically, that what we know of Gautama's teaching we have to take in a roundabout way, mostly from Oriental scholars, not being able as a people to read the original text. I will also

admit that thinkers differ, as interpreters of the Christian Scriptures differ. Also that where Bibles are scattered everywhere, so that he who runs may read, the sacred books of Buddha are unopened by the mass of Occidental humanity. Granting all this, and the difference in *interpretation* given us by Oriental scholars (an almost vital difference perhaps), yet we do claim that when a certain number of men, who on all questions, scientific and psychological, show themselves to be sound, and who challenge our study of their language and a like investigation of that which they themselves have made, — when such thinkers present to us an interpretation of the inner meaning of that great "Come Outer" Gautama, who broke from the superstition of Brahmanism and stood, as they tell us, upon a basis of experience and inference, there is as solid ground for drawing certain conclusions as for pronouncing judgment upon the truth or myth of Christianity.

To go into the psychology of Buddhism is

not altogether our purpose. We will simply make bold to state that, according to our understanding of it, stripped of all its glamour and glow of mysticism, and all of its myth, poetry, and symbolism, it is a counterpart of our modern scientific philosophy, of which Spencer is one of the most powerful living exponents. We believe, whether Gautama wrestled all night under the Bo tree or not, that when he threw off the incubus of Brahmanism, he did a mightier thing than when he renounced a kingdom; because he dared to plant his foot on the same foundation whence modern science has sprung; and that his boldness, like that of Herbert Spencer, lay not in renouncing the honors of man, but in unshackling himself from the bonds of superstition.

Let us look a little at the work and philosophy of Spencer, and see how the past and present blend into each other as though there were but a day between. But first let me say here, that as to that divine transcendentalism which deals with the laws by the Law

of them, and is perhaps the text of the life-long sermons preached by the apostles of ancient and modern philosophy — as to that I have nothing to say; nor is it for me, in this paper, to discuss whether the Western conception of Buddhism is correct or not, or whether annihilation is analogous to the repose of Nirvana, or whether some of the savants of the East think to the contrary and draw from the subtle teaching of Gautama an idea of the fullness of an individual, immortal life never conceived of in the heaven of the Christian; nor shall I question whether Herbert Spencer is a realist or an idealist, or if his Unknowable resolves itself into chaos so far as the Unit of Eternal Identity is concerned; or if this much-vaunted Unknowable can even be looked upon as such, so long as man asserts that it cannot be known. Whether the Master of the Deer Gardens and the Sage of London are to be eventually swallowed by their own generalizations, is immaterial to the discussion in this article. What has been done

with the knowable is the question, and how in this life we can, by experience and inference, make headway toward fuller consciousness of being, is all I desire to consider. Not that I set aside the hypothesis of the eternity of being, but simply that it is irrelevant here.

During twenty centuries gone, from Aristotle to Buffon, a few men ahead in thought dreamed that evolution was the solution of life; but Lamarck, at the dawn of the present century, advanced the first hypothesis, scientifically, of organic evolution.

Facts, up to the beginning of the present century, were too few to admit of an approximate demonstration of the theory. Cuvier and Lamarck gathered data which rendered the establishment of the doctrine of evolution possible. Cuvier opposed the new theory with his tremendous authority, and here came the great battle between a disciple of Lamarck (Saint-Hilaire) and Cuvier. Prejudice, dogma, and tradition,

backed by Cuvier, won the victory, and the doctrine of evolution was set aside for fifty years.

This time having passed, the dawn of a new era commenced; the thinkers began to scintillate light. Darwin, Wallace, Huxley, and Spencer, — a galaxy of white stars, — one of which, a veritable Sirius among the brilliants, encompassed the whole span of generalization, including not only the evolved life of the material universe, but that of philosophy, history, and science. According to Mr. Youmans, Spencer was the first to reconcile the intuitional and the experience hypotheses over which philosophers had quarreled for ages. He claimed that all knowledge and the very faculties of knowing originate in experience, and that the primary elements of thought are *a priori* intuitions to the individual, being derived from ancestral experience.

Whether intuition is the result of inheritance, according to the evolutionary theory of Spencer, or whether man carries along

his memories from life to life, making the experience of one incarnation the intuition of another, according to the teachings of Oriental philosophy, amounts to but little in this discussion, for the result in the present exhibition of life on this planet, or on any other for that matter, would be practically the same. It would be the doctrine of cause and effect, however one might word it. In fact, it makes no difference in the reading of the page of the life of to-day, for the reading's sake, whether a particular unit of consciousness has expressed itself indefinitely in all forms from the simplest to the most complex, or whether a certain general consciousness has asserted itself in countless forms, by rhythmic involution and evolution eternally. Call this evolving and involving the rhythm of Orientalism or the evolution of Herbert Spencer, it is the same thing; and whether this self which evolves is the cosmic eternal I or the microcosmic eternal I, is a question unproven by either. Both systems teach the instability of form

and the stability of principle. The "illusion" of the Hinayana Buddhist and the unstable matter of the physicist are one and the same.

The Baconian method of exclusion and elimination is noticeable also in both ancient and modern thought. The Unknowable of Spencer and the Unspeakable of Gautama are alike in meaning and awfulness. When the Buddhist teaches us that "the Reason" is not the least akin to reasoning, he speaks as does Herbert Spencer when he says in the second volume of his "Psychology," page 391, "Hence philosophy, if it does not stand on some datum underlying reason, must acknowledge it has nothing on which to stand, must confess itself to be baseless."

Aristotle taught sharply the distinction between a contrary and a contradiction, maintaining that the universal negative has its contrary in the universal affirmative; nevertheless that a particular negative is contradicted by a universal affirmative and a particular affirmative by a universal nega-

tive. Herein lies the great distinction between contradiction and opposition. Spencer seizes upon this true law of antithesis, for he says: —

"Object is the unknown permanent nexus which is never itself phenomenon, *but that which holds* phenomena together. So subject is the unknown permanent nexus which is never itself a state of consciousness but that which holds consciousness together. . . . And just as the external nexus is that which exists amid transitory appearance, so the internal nexus is that which continues to exist amid transitory ideas." And again he remarks that "the I which continuously survives as the subject of these changing states is that portion of the Unknowable power which is statically conditioned in special nervous structures, pervaded by a dynamically conditioned portion of the Unknowable power called energy."

That the Buddhists are atheists because they do not define God, is about as true as

that Herbert Spencer is a "crude" realist because he finds no language for the name even of his Unknowable.

There is a certain parallel, too, between the ancient Sage and the modern apostle of the new organon in their struggles to get a hearing. Gautama found himself practically deserted by his five disciples when he returned to them enlightened, and met and contended with the fires of opposition. Spencer had the world against him; the church was his natural enemy; he was upheld by no scientific society; he was poor, he was sick. The press opposed him, and a publisher was not forthcoming; but, nevertheless, he has displayed for the better part of his life a concentration which could only have been the result of an absolute conviction of the truth of his hypothesis. Among his opponents were some formidable names, including that of Stuart Mill; but even he, not long before his death, admitted that the rereading of Spencer's work gave him a new conception (which was partially due to the

progress in his own mind), and he at last conceded in a letter to Dr. Carpenter, that the principle which Mr. Spencer advanced years before, and ahead of all men, made a new basis for the science of mind.

While writing his "Psychology" in 1854, Mr. Spencer arrived at the conclusion that evolution is the universal law; and if so, must be applied to all researches of knowledge. Of course this must of necessity revolutionize modern thought, and, strange to say, revive the method pursued by the Sage of Benares. Mr. Spencer was thoroughly original in the modern world and followed no master. Mr. Darwin and Mr. Wallace dealt with natural selection; but this is not evolution in its comprehensive sense, and it remained for Herbert Spencer to write the "Synthetic Philosophy." With his tremendous grasp on generalization, his unequal causality, and his marvelous memory, he has come to the front as a master of synthesis.

In a letter written by the president of

Columbia College in 1882, we find this: "Spencer's philosophy is the only philosophy that satisfies an earnestly inquiring mind. All other philosophies (at least in my own experience) serve more to perplex than enlighten, and it seems to me we have in him not only the profoundest thinker of our time, but the most capacious and powerful intellect of all time. Aristotle and his master were not more beyond the pygmies who preceded them, than he is beyond Aristotle. Kant, Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling are gropers in the dark by the side of him. In all the history of science there is but one name that can be compared to him, and that is Newton."

"The peculiarity of Spencer's system seems to me to be that it appeals directly to our intuitions, and is therefore at once clearly intelligible and self-evidently true, which is a character I cannot give to any of the purely speculative philosophies with which the world abounds."

An approximate adjustment of the within

to the without, in the increasing scale of consciousness, is what Spencer defines as *life*.

"The continual adjustment of internal relations to external relations," corresponds to the Nirvana of Buddha, which means to strike an approximate balance between the objective and the subjective, or self and environment.

In drawing this strange parallel between the synthetic religion of Gautama and the synthetic philosophy of Spencer, I desire no misjudgment. Not for one instant would I make any claim to a resemblance between the clear-cut, scientific erudition of the modern master and the apparently false and debased presentation or interpretation of Eastern philosophy. I maintain only, from first to last, that if the Oriental scholars and expounders of northern Buddhism are the true interpreters of the teachings of Gautama (and this profound teaching is too little known, I must confess), — if, I say, they give us the heart and the kernel of Buddhistic philosophy, then the synthetic religion of the

East stands side by side with the synthetic philosophy of the West; for out of the Orient has come a something which glitters as brilliantly as the jewel of England, and whether that something is called a religion or a philosophy makes but little difference, for in wide comprehensiveness it encompasses both.

In the great way of Buddhism there is a marshaling of powers to strike a balance between the subject and the object, so that an individual may poise, as it were, between the two, never remaining at the absolute center or static condition. This same tendency toward equilibration is demonstrated in Spencer's philosophy, and upon the consciousness of it and the opposite law of heterogeneity are shown the possibilities of being. From the biology of Spencer coils the spiral as naturally as it rises from Oriental inference; and the sweep of generalization is as large in one as in the other. The serpent with its tail in its mouth is perfectly understood by modern science as energy

returning upon itself, and the deeper scholars in evolution know with Oriental thinkers, that progress in one sense is only apparent; for in the rhythmic sweep around a cycle of experience one must involve and evolve consistently, that action and reaction are true to each other, and that in-breathing and out-breathing have a like meaning. To rise from the grave of potentiality into life is, to all intents and purposes, progress; because waking means to our consciousness more than sleeping, and action more than inaction.

The evolution of truth out of one's self by the means of other selves can be done by empiricism and deduction. Practical experience piles up data by which one becomes aware of a generalization; or, on the contrary, having the principle intuitively, one may deduct an experience. That is the "great vehicle" of Buddhism, and not in the least different, as I understand it, from the method of modern science, which accumulates facts sufficient to guarantee the assump-

tion of a working hypothesis, that later on is demonstrated to be true or false.

Buddhism denies creation or a fixing of times for the ego to bring forth the non-ego, or the subject the object. Spencer makes subject and object coeternal, and thus crowns philosophy. Modern inductive methods, as well as ancient inductive religions, rest alike on the basis of the coexistence of mind and matter, and thus do away with the mist and cloud which have enveloped the thought of many great thinkers. Given the pair of opposites, subject and object forever interplaying with each other, dominated eternally by a mysterious nexus which inseparably unites the two, making them in a sense one, and you have a hint of Spencerian philosophy. Given mind and matter, coeternal and interdealing, dominated by the principle of principles, and you have the essence and core of Buddhistic thought.

Between these two extremes of the modern and the ancient have flourished the mental gymnasts from Plato and Aristotle down to

the German giants of the last three centuries, all of whom have in a greater or less degree, played at the game of shuttlecock with the mighty principles of being. The masters, stumbling on the ponderosity of the syllogism, forgot that a theory might be tested by practice, and groped about in the deep shades of their own minds, finding no path out of the shadows of self. Newton had but one datum upon which to formulate a principle, and in the formulating of it tossed over the syllogism and demonstrated the method of Gautama Buddha, namely, that of experiencing first, and concluding afterward. No one can doubt that the major premise of the syllogism lies somewhere hidden in the mind; but in the realm of consciousness experience comes before inference, and the future progress of the world may safely rest on the sound method of the author of "Synthetic Philosophy."

From the point of ethics, then, he who knows thoroughly either Mahayana Buddhism, or "Synthetic Philosophy," has a rule

of action fundamental and sublime. His main idea is to adjust to environment; and by environment, of course, is meant everything outside of ego itself, the observer harmonizing with the observed, for evil is chaotic and good is harmonic.

The life of one who knows Nirvana is like the splendid rush of the star; balanced between attraction and repulsion, he travels through the heaven of ideas thrilled with the fire of himself.

The synthetic philosopher scans the world of heterogeneity from his high peak of generalization, discovering unity in variety, and the fundamental principle of ethics in the eternal tangle of discord.

XVIII

ROMANCE

It has been and is the habit of nearly every established religion or cult to sneer at the so-called superstitions of others, forgetting at the same time their own extravaganzas in a similar direction.

There were two insane men who made great sport of each other: one imagined himself afflicted with a hole between the shoulder blades, through which the air whistled, to the detriment of his very vitals; while the other supposed that he had buzzing wheels in his head. These men laughed continually; he with the hole between the shoulder blades calling the man with the wheels a fool, and the man with the wheels condemning the other man as a hopeless dunce.

Where on earth shall we find an absolutely sane human being, I wonder; one without some sly, secret superstition, if he be not bold enough to expose its nakedness and call it a religion. Even a sage may glance over his right shoulder at the new moon, or pick up a horse's shoe when unobserved.

As we have stated many times in this work, there has never yet been a religion established without its accompaniment of apparent miracle; and it is poor taste, to say the least, for the followers of one cult to make sport of the weaknesses of another.

The legends that hover around the story of Jesus—his birth, death, and resurrection—are perhaps the most ultra and impossible of any extant. Yet many a time have I watched a supercilious smile creeping over the face of an orthodox believer when a spiritualist related some probable tale, where events out of the ordinary had been supposed to have occurred; and yet this same severely orthodox believer accepts without

quibble the assertion ascribed to Jesus, "That greater works can ye do," etc.

Superstition is inbred in humanity; it is the very central core of mystery which all the religiously inclined find in the occult and improbable.

There is nothing really nude to the soul's eye; dig up a plant, roots and all, but where is the naked life? It has fled. We speak of naked truth, — her other name is Isis, and she is veiled. This sense of the final mystery in the human soul grows often into an extravaganza, and we have superstition, but, alas, we cherish our own fairy tales and wander about in the maze of a religious romance, jeering uncharitably at our brother who is lost in another, no whit more fictitious than our own. "People who live in glass houses should never throw stones." He who discovers a mote in his brother's eye should remember the beam in his own.

There have been pages written in condemnation of fakirs and fools, by men who

had climbed the invisible ladder of fakirism themselves — a ladder leaning against nothing and braced nowhere.

Divines have hurled anathemas at idol worshipers and called them blasphemers, who themselves sat each day at the feet of an image, fashioned in shape like their own, born of legend and nourished by romance. Consistency! Consistency! We find diamonds and pearls and rubies, but where art thou?

Each individual lives in the center of his own fairy tale, and all that we can justly ask of him is that he admit the gossamer of the web that he has spun about himself, and look with charitable eyes through the mystic meshes in which he finds his brother entangled. If I laugh at the god Shiva and cross myself before a wax image of the Virgin, I am despotic and intolerant. If I stand on the mysterious Methodist platform, over which flows the cleansing blood of Christ, and preach the doctrine of the Atonement in a voice of thunder, I need not

take offense if the worshiper of Allah, kneeling on his prayer rug, faces Mecca and prays to the one God to deliver me from the bonds of superstition, and the shackles of delusion.

If, sitting quietly in my upholstered pew, surrounded by broadcloth orthodoxy, protestant and clean, I draw my skirts from the polluting touch of a credulous spiritualist just from the dim stuffiness of a séance room, I need show no resentment should he search out the story of the floating ax, amid the legends of my Book of books, and pass it to me to read for my morning Scripture lesson.

The spirit of all just inquiry and research is toleration. A man who defends his own belief and respects others' is in a fair way to grow and broaden; he will be a discoverer, a synthesizer. His eternal question will be, "What is Truth?" "Where is Truth?" He will weigh, gauge, sift, winnow, and hate but one order of beings, — that of intolerance and despotism.

My friend comes to me mysteriously and speaks of the credulity of Mr. S. who has told him a fabulous tale about an apparition that walks at night. I gently, aye timidly, remind my friend that his Bible, in which he believes, speaks of similar apparitions; to be sure they walked long ago instead of now, but what of that? My friend is outraged and becomes thereafter my enemy.

My neighbor confides in me that Mr. J., who lives on the other side of him, has been cultivating mental scientists, who claim to perform miracles by the power of mind and the laying on of hands. My neighbor condemns Mr. J. and calls him a lunatic. I shyly remind my neighbor that the apostles of the New Testament, upon which he stakes his immortal soul, seem to have had similar ideas to those of Mr. J., for they, too, believed in laying on of hands. Upon this my neighbor turns his back and looks past me into heaven whenever we chance to meet.

I wander into a church and listen to the preacher, who speaks of the heathen, mean-

ing the Buddhist, Brahman, etc., as though they were utterly pitiable because they seem to be worshipers of idols, in the forms of bronze Buddhas or wooden Shivas, forgetting that these apparent monstrosities are simply symbols to the benighted heathen, and are really as sensible as many of our illustrated Bibles, wherein are winged angels, haloed saints, the New Jerusalem, and the pit of hell.

No man has ever yet seen his own face, save as a reflection; so let him be chary about discovering a disfigurement in that of another, lest that other find a scar on him.

Truth is an opal, a changeless change; while one man calls it blue, another finds it red, and a third pronounces it yellow. In it one beholds the rising sun; another the setting; and a third the glory of the noon. Romance weaves its opalescent spell about mankind, and truth appears, to vanish, and vanishes to appear amid its iridescent fires.

No one has the awful, utter truth in consciousness; the spell is on us all; then let

us not, standing on small pedestals close to earth, declare our little pulpits to be the throne of God.

We desire in this work of ours to follow the meandering trail of the Christos through the centuries and over earth. In his steps we stumble upon the ruins of Indian temples and Mohammedan mosques. In his steps we climb to Buddhist monasteries and Hermetic caves. In his steps we march after Catholic mystics and Protestant preachers. North, south, east, west, we have followed him since history dawned. Before Manes, before Homer, the Christos was; no man has preceded him; from the very jungle of evil his clear eyes have looked; from the banks of the tawny river, from the high mountain, from the sea, — The Reality of Romance — The Truth of Fiction — The Prophecy of Dreams — The Spinner of Fairy Webs — The Unity — The Truth.

At Him, at It, let no man laugh.

XIX

THE CHRIST OF THE FIRST CENTURY

In the minds of men to-day, innumerable Christs sit enthroned; mental images of one born in Bethlehem, crucified in Jerusalem. These images vary according to the texture of human brains and their grasp on the logic of history. To some he is a martyred God, an actual son of Divinity, that passing through the body of virginity, appeared among men to save them from the eternal curse of sin. To others he is a Trismegistus, or thrice great Individuality, who soared to the heights of intellect, plunged to the depths of passionate emotions, and completely mastered and guided his servant, the flesh.

To others again, he is a mystic being, more internal than external, an inner face,

a divine heart that appears to ecstatic man in vision, around which has gathered the Syrian legend.

To me he is both man and God. In my mind he appears divine because of that forceful thoroughness with which he discovered fundamentals, examining not only the leaves and branches of the tree of life, but the root also. This man Jesus that I adore, whether he be but my ideal or the reality, had the courage of his convictions, and presumed to put them into practice, in the face of death.

Traveling backward along that misty perspective called memory, I come into Syria, where lived a race that was influenced not only by the stern Mosaic law, but was also among its more cultured class, dominated, unconsciously or otherwise, by the never dying mind of the Alexandrian school. The Jewish and Egypto-Greek intellect had amalgamated, and this man, that for me was Jesus, I behold in the mental wilderness of Syria, striving to disentangle the puzzling

web of the Jehovah, of the Jew, and the Eternal Principle of the Greek. The Anthropomorphic and the Inherent must necessarily become reconciled, or one or the other would pass into nothingness.

The Christ of my Bible, the First Century Christ, solved this problem and more; he emphasized in law its eternal antithesis, and, seizing upon the parallelism of opposites, brought the truth to light in practice; and for his sublime audacity was put to death, and rewarded with the wreath of the Immortals — a crown of thorns.

Many pictures and symbols have I beheld of this First Century Christ: a Christ with a halo about the head; a Christ with feminine locks and a benign and contented smile; a Christ with a woman's face and a mother's eyes; a martyred Christ maintaining his beauty even in the death struggle. But to me, these are but paintings and ivory statuettes. The Christ that I behold has soil and dust on his seamless robe, his pillow is a stone, and his bed the ground. His

eyes have at times a hunted look; his hands have labored and are hard. He rends his garments and weeps over Jerusalem. He is a patriot, a poet, a thinker! Passion tears his heart; thought tortures his brain. His three years of teaching and practice were one nightmare of agony, culminating in the sublime climax, when he said to his disciples who slept, "Couldest thou not watch with me one hour?"

A Trismegistus! yes — but at what price! Escaping danger, eluding death, flying from point to point, scoffed at, cursed, ridiculed, — with disheveled hair, old in his youth!

The Christ of my conception discovered no royal road to power, but fought every step of his way to the establishment of his kingdom. Though the Prince of Peace, he earned repose through contest; on the sword's point was the olive branch; in the curse was his blessing. All the pomp and splendor that came after him were far from his expectation and would have astounded him had he dreamed of their possibility.

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," meant simply this: "If I but prove my position, demonstrate this law of being, other men beholding will follow my example. Look at me. Come unto me. Love me, do as I do, believe on me. Why? Because I am demonstrating a fundamental law. I establish axioms, I present you with tried formulas; if this work I can do, so can you also; even greater. I bring you the core of Greek Thought, the Ekayana of Philosophy, the triumph of psychics. I will test this law upon myself though I die in the attempt. For this Pearl of great Price I dare the rabble of mankind, and the legions of hell. Drive me hence, I will return; kill me, I will rise; deny me, I will force your acknowledgment; for in me shall ye find the reason of reasons, — the very way itself!"

In peril I behold him in the crowd speaking in parable, subtly inculcating truth, while his searching eye is alert for the enemy, that is sure, sooner or later, to put a stop to

his active tongue. He is ever in a hurry, rushing here and there, conscious that his time is short, and that a life work must be crowded into a few years. He has but little opportunity to choose places, people, or conditions; on the contrary, he seems a man of circumstance, buffeted from "pillar to post," hustled, elbowed, moving eternally under surveillance, always conscious of his danger, yet desperate to inculcate his philosophy; aye, even to prove that his system is equal to emergency and must ever be the supreme panacea of the unhappy.

He walked on water to defy it; he taunted the mob to escape it; proving the unflinching possibility of the human will by making, through his death, its transcendent demonstration. "Lifted up" — upon the cross, a target for all eyes, he might well have said, Behold your Lord; not I, but that for which I am — the Law.

XX

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHRIST

And now comes the man of science who says: "Do you pretend to offer us in this age of great discoveries along the line of physics and metaphysics, when biology, psychics, and sociology, anatomy, physiology, and mechanics, are at their height, the identical Christ, born in the year One — He who lived at a time when there were no electric wires nor submarine cables, when the snorting engine and the automobile would have been looked upon as fiends from Hades — He who went on foot for want of quick transportation, and knew nothing of giant trusts and great corporations — A Christ who had never looked through a microscope nor scanned the heavens with a telescope — One who knew nothing of the amœba, nor

had realized the tremendous dynamic potency of the centrosome?"

"Do you present us with one who had failed to discover the law of evolution, had never traced his ancestry farther back than the Jew, and knew nothing of the Darwinian ape as man's distant relation — Do you look upon us as veritable apes ourselves, that may possibly be duped by an ancient, — we, who weigh with nicety the very stars above, and calculate with exactness the coming of an eclipse, — we, who have studied living matter until we have found it an insoluble problem, and the so-called immortal soul till we have learned its incomprehensibility?"

"And more, — when in history we find Pythagoras, Thales, Democritus, Plato, why study him who seems left out of history, and appears in the records of his disciples more like a myth than a reality?"

"In the name of this Christ of yours," they say, "have been done the worst deeds that history records. Are we mistaken

when we assert that the massacre of St. Bartholomew had a religious element at its base, and that your Jesus, son of a virgin, was more or less heard of in this appalling affair? Are we far wrong when we claim that bloody Mary staked her soul, as well as her throne, on her abhorrent faith in a god man that countenanced her acts? Had the Spanish Inquisition anything to do with religion we ask, and was the Christ of the First Century the invisible instigator of this horror of the past?"

"What of the burning of Servetus, the torture of Hypatia, the death of Savonarola, and of Bruno? What think you of the Crusades, when the defenders of the faith of Christianity waded through the streets of Jerusalem, knee deep in the blood of innocent victims, slashing right and left with their swords, regardless of justice and human rights?"

"If this Christ of ignorance and superstition, injustice and dogmatism, priestcraft and blood, is the one that you present

us as the Twentieth Century standard, we repudiate him now and forever."

This protest coming from men of science is both rational and just. But, as we have stated before, Truth is an opal; it flashes in many tints. The Jesus of the First Century, we are quite certain, spent little or no time along the lines of modern research. Whether our sun system contained a certain number of asteroids, he probably never thought; about protoplasm, he very likely had no means of knowing; in mechanics and in physics, he was doubtless uninterested; nor did his prophetic glance extend far into the future ages. He spent no time in calculating results. Persecutions, wars, the sword, he foretold, but of the awful horrors to be enacted in his name for centuries after him, he probably never dreamed. This Jesus of the First Century, to whom we bid you look, though learned in the lore of his age, was neither a man of science, as we so understand one, nor an infallible prophet. The wonder of him lies, not in all this, nor by

the modern tape line can the mystery of him be measured. He was neither modern nor ancient, he was both. In one thing alone was he superb, the Law — the Law — the Law. He came to fulfill the Law.

I ask you, men of science, to find me another, who as teacher or a descended god, is even to-day striving to absolutely put in practice the law which he believes.

Everywhere are men of learning, professors of physics and of psychics, explorers, specialists, generalists; but who among them is both teacher and pupil, doctor and patient, at the same time? If perchance you find such a man, and we do not deny him, for he is possible even now, in what manner is he deeper or more subtle than Jesus of the First Century?

To be sure if he be a specialist, he may have accumulated more data, but the law upon which he builds must be the same as that of the time of Christ.

If he be a generalist, he may have a larger scope, but the principle has in no sense

changed. Whether specialist or generalist, he has learned exactly what Jesus knew, — that the essence of Law is forever out of reach, and that with *It* the centuries have naught to do. In practice only is law available to man; and this Law, that Jesus taught and lived also, What was It?

Men of science, the very same upon which you base experiment to-day! Attraction and Repulsion — Action and Reaction — the mighty, yet easily applied, — the simple, yet incomprehensible, LAW OF RHYTHM.

And what, you ask, is the meaning of the Atonement for sin so emphatically preached by theology the world over? What, I answer, can it imply other than an at-one-ement with this basic law, in consciousness, which means balance or justice, and therefore sinlessness.

And what of the sacred blood of Christ, spilled for all? What, I answer, can it mean save the blood of sacrifice, shed by a Jesus, or any other who pays the price of an astounding victory over temptation, and ob-

tains the primal object for which he struggles.

Spilled for all. If Christ could thus achieve, all can thus achieve. And this possibility of sacrifice in Jesus or ourselves, includes in itself a power to love also, for no man lays down his life for an object lest he love it. No man can do "greater work" than to shed his blood for an individual, a race, or a cause. Love then for the "mark of his high calling," conscious at-one-ment with the Law of laws, sacrifice unto the very shedding of his literal blood, that he might "be lifted up" into the goal of his desire, enthralled the sublime Christos, and enshrouds theology, even to this day.

XXI

THE THREAD OF UNITY

I SEEM to be in a jungle, wandering aimlessly here and there. The place is dense with verdure, and heavy with perfume. Trees fight for standing room, and vines, in their voluptuous profligacy, strangle the trees. The earth teems with life, bringing forth myriads of contending, living things that perpetually compete with one another for light and drink and food. The different genera seem ever at war; the various species are in continual conflict; yet, in spite of this, a certain unity is discovered which makes this vast array of incongruities inseparable and one. Winding in and out like a gleaming serpent flashing its scales in the sun, is a river. Undulating, gliding, muttering, whispering, it steals along nour-

ishing the jungle from border to border, suckling the trees, vines, and shameless tropical plants alike; tying the clean pines and the voluptuous palms together, making the wilderness a unit in variety, a variegated whole which the river binds.

Should this book of ours appear to the reader but a jungle of words, full of clean and unclean things, tropical, frigid smatterings of Indian and of Persian lore, teeming with weedy language about Syria and the north British Isles, we make claim, nevertheless, to a silver thread of unity running through the mass, which ties and binds the many into one.

In wandering along the Mahayana we have strayed right and left into byways and alleys, invariably to return later to the great highway, where the masters walked and reasoned together, each a law unto himself in the finality of his philosophy and the acme of his religion; yet, astounding paradox! the Law of them all being one and the same.

Through our jungle of words then, our dabbling into Oriental lore, our scanning of European philosophy, we lead you imperceptibly perhaps, but certainly, to the Twentieth Century Christ; who is the Sum of the past, — the Effect of the Cause, yet, strange to say, but another aspect of Him who walked and suffered in far Galilee long centuries ago.

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